

DRAMA **CRITIQUE**

A CRITICAL REVIEW OF THEATRE ARTS AND LITERATURE

*Published three times yearly by the
National Catholic Theatre Conference*

C O N T E N T S

Volume I	November, 1958	Number 3
The Concept of Christian Tragedy.....	Dominic Rover, O.P.	2
The Godmask of MacLeish.....	Leonard Casper	11
The Miracle Play in America: an Aspect of Folk Theatre.....	Lionel D. Wyld	13
The Chorus of the National Greek Theatre.....	Sara Lee Stadelman	19
The Death of Falstaff: Green Fields Once More.....	R. J. Schoeck	27
A Plan for Playwrights-in-Residence.....	George Herman	30
Drama: To Teach or To Please?.....	Donald Hugh Dickinson	40
Drama Bookshelf.....		48

*William Talbot's reviews of the current Broadway
season will appear in the February issue.*

Editor: Sister Mary Marguerite, R.S.M., Mercy College, Detroit, Michigan
 Associate Editors: George Herman, Clarke College, Dubuque, Iowa
 Donald Hugh Dickinson, Loyola University, Chicago, Illinois
 Advisory Editors: Rev. Gabriel Stapleton, S.D.S., St. Mary High School, Lancaster, New York
 Rev. Urban Nagle, O.P., College of St. Mary of the Springs, Columbus, Ohio
 Rev. Thomas J. Bresnahan, Mercy College, Detroit, Michigan
 Rev. William E. Farrell, O.S.A., University of Villanova, Villanova, Pennsylvania
 Rev. Gilbert Hartke, O.P., Catholic University, Washington, D.C.
 Book Review Editor: Sister Mary Xavier, B.V.M., Clarke College, Dubuque, Iowa
 Contact-Placement Editor: Sister Mary LaVerne, O.S.F., College of St. Francis, Joliet, Illinois

Published at Detroit, Michigan, for the National Catholic Theatre Conference, Executive Office, Lancaster, New York.

NCTC memberships (subscriber, \$3.00; package subscriber \$5.00; regular \$10.00; sustaining \$25.00; Life \$100.00) include subscription to DRAMA CRITIQUE for which \$3.00 is set aside for a year's subscription. Single copies \$1.25. All memberships should be sent to the NCTC Executive Office, 142 Laverack Avenue, Lancaster, N.Y.

Manuscripts and circulation inquiries should be addressed to the Editor, DRAMA CRITIQUE, Mercy College, 8200 West Outer Drive, Detroit 19, Michigan. All manuscripts should conform to the Chicago Manual of Style.

Advertising inquiries should be addressed to Mr. Edgar Kloten, NCTC Executive Office, Lancaster, N.Y.

THE CONCEPT OF CHRISTIAN TRAGEDY

By DOMINIC ROVER, O.P.

At first glance the enterprise appears to be a strange and unnecessary one: an attempt to prove that the deepest, truest and most universal of myths is a fitting subject for the gravest of art-forms, the tragedy. Add to this another incongruity, that the central action of the Christian myth — the death of the God-Man on the Cross — appears as the most tragic of tragic themes. When, then, the critical problem? Why are we slow to accept the notion of Christian tragedy? There are difficulties in the notion, of course, and neither the critic nor the theologian can wave them aside. But both critic and theologian are faced today with a certain exacerbation of the issue. Voices are raised impatiently and the question is asked with a certain insistence, as though a great deal depended on the answer.

There is a reason for this and in a sense it has nothing to do with art or drama or the components of a great art-form. It has to do with reality and with man's view of reality. For the critical problem arises today at a time when an existentialist philosophy and a strongly thematic existentialist art have given birth to a new and absolute tragic sense. It appears that what is really at stake in the current investigation of the possibility of Christian tragedy is not simply the verification of certain artistic canons but the adumbration of a total view of life. In some existentialist philosophies tragedy is considered the only serious art-form. Why? Because tragedy alone reflects the emptiness and absurdity of the human condition; tragedy alone is capable of constructing an ordered sign of human disorder, comedy functioning as a vengeful joke on the unknown author of man's lot or as a moment of giddy escape from the misery and confusion of the real. At any rate the claims of nihilistic tragedy are made absolute, and contrasted with its pure, severe lines the Christian mythos and Christian tragedy alike are made to appear simplistic, sentimental, salvationist.

In such a critical context the defense of an authentic Christian tragedy becomes also a defense of Christian values. It is one thing to be without hope or to elaborate a work of art that is true to a hopeless vision of life; it is quite another to make hope an exile from the greatest art, a weak and watery element, fit only for melodrama, Victorian pathos and the brave-new-world-in-your-own-backyard heroics of the Readers' Digest. Yet serious critics of our own day settle the issue of tragic content in just this way. So, for example, I. A. Richards holds that "tragedy is only possible to a mind that is for the moment agnostic or Manichaeic The least touch of any theology which has a compensating Heaven to offer the tragic hero is fatal." Karl Jaspers speaks for the Existentialists:

DOMINIC ROVER, O.P.

Educated at Georgetown College and Georgetown University Law School, Father Rover entered the Dominican Order in 1944 and after ordination in 1951 pursued graduate studies at the Yale Drama School. He was assistant Director of the Blackfriars' Theatre in New York City from 1955 to 1957 and is now professor of Sacred Eloquence at the Dominican House of Studies in Washington, D.C. He is the author of several plays, including *Praise of Folly* (in collaboration with Rev. Robert A. Morris, O.P.), *Bamboo Cross* and *Age and Grace*. He has also written for television, his scripts appearing on the *Jane Wyman Show*, *The Catholic Hour* and *Look Up and Live*.

"There can be no genuinely Christian tragedy because Christian salvation destroys the sense of being trapped without chance of escape." And Anouilh says in his *Antigone*: "In tragedy there is no hope, no dirty hope. One is caught, caught at last."

Before we examine the very real problems posed by the concept of Christian tragedy, may we not ask by what right these authors assume this limited, univocal definition of tragedy? Critical history is clearly against them in this matter since it admits within the genus of tragedy many works of dramatic art which do not end on this note of utter hopelessness. What a narrow range for the critical judgment to be forced into, with no tragic *imprimatur* forthcoming for the Book of Job, for the *Oresteia*, for *Polyeucte* or the Purgatorio or for Murder in the Cathedral! Probably not for the Oedipus cycle, either. Nor, perhaps, for Hamlet with its intimations of a final peace and the restitution of civil order in the state. The Oedipus story, for example, ends at Colonus with a death that was fearful and pathetic, yet admirable in a way that makes us conscious of the hidden relationship between human suffering and some sort of final transfiguration. "The passing of the man was not with lamentation, or in sickness and suffering, but above mortals' wonderful." The tragic king, though still a victim, has yet become a mystic, contemplating the fruitful meanings behind human suffering. And in the great trilogy which is the triumph of Greek drama the curse of the house of Atreus is exorcised by the divinely-inspired reconciliations at the end of the Eumenides. The Chorus appeals to the goddess: "Lady Athene, what is the place you say is mine?" And she answers: "A place free of all grief and pain. Take it for yours." The Richards' formula simply will not work here, not even for pagan tragedy.

When the great philosopher-critic, Aristotle, sets out to define tragedy and to discuss its types and kinds, he is eminently more painstaking and realistic than the existentialist critics of today with their narrow view of the tragic genre. For Aristotle there are many species of tragedy, some stressing action, some passion, some with recognition, some without it. There is a type in which the blow falls first and significant knowledge comes after; in another the issues and the characters are known beforehand; in still another the blow never falls, though we feel the force and weight of it over us through most of the play. How are they united, these species and variants of tragedy? Only in this, that they focus our dramatic interest on the decline of a tragic hero under the burden of undeserved suffering, so as to evoke and purify in us the passions of pity and fear. In short, Aristotle's definition of tragedy is an analogical one that will wisely account for the tragic tone and the tragic response in a variety of structural forms. It may be that one structure is more purely tragic than another; the tragic response may be felt more keenly under certain conditions. Aristotle himself is careful to analyze what such a structure and such conditions might be. But he works always with a workable definition: tragedy is an imitation in the dramatic mode of a significant tale of human suffering. Never is there any attempt to force tragedy itself into an univocal nihilistic design or to limit the tragic response to unrelieved anguish or despair. Such a view would have been far too doctrinaire for the great philosopher, quite inconsistent with the function of catharsis in the tragic

response and in plain fact unverifiable in the plays he was examining. Neither his testimony nor critical history nor the evidence of great plays of all ages nor tongues validate such a Manichaean view of tragedy.

This, then, is the first thing to remember: we must work with an analogical definition of tragedy which will allow us to examine the work of art with a certain objectivity and freedom, unhampered by inflexible academic rules. Working with such a critical instrument, refining it as we go along (as Aristotle did), we can hope for a measure of maturity and discretion in our judgments on the possibility of a Christian tragedy. Remember that we have a *free* instrument, demanding no more than this — that we look for the possibility of treating in a grave and elevated manner a serious human situation capable of arousing and purging the passions of pity and fear.

Even with such a mobile definition it is evident that the answer to the critical question is going to depend on an evaluation of the material that the Christian dispensation offers for dramatic structuring. No definition of tragedy could be broad enough to include essentially non-tragic material. But what of the Christian mythos? Is it such a texture of light and glory and easy reconciliations that the tragic tension is forever relieved before climax and the tragic catharsis dissolved in a rush of sentiment and optimism? In making such an evaluation the task of the critic-theologian is remarkably simplified in this fact only, that in confronting the totality of revealed truth he finds that Christian revelation at its highest moment achieves a specifically *dramatic* mode. Revelation, in its final phase, is a dramatized mystery; not now a message inscribed on tables of stone or a voice out of the whirlwind, but a mystery acted out by a divine protagonist who gives witness to the truth in a great dramatic action which is also a passion. In this crucial agon a great and noble figure passes from good fortune to bad, infinitely beyond his deserving, and in such a way as infallibly to excite and purge the passions of pity and fear.

It seems to me that the concept of Christian tragedy stands or falls on the answer to the question: is Christ a tragic hero? If He is, He will bring with Him a whole court and kingdom of tragic heroes — Abel and Isaac, Job and Joseph from the Old Testament; from the New Testament His Mother, His friends and followers, the Holy Innocents, the Martyrs and all who fell before the event, during, and after, under the curse of the crucifixion. If His tragedy is authentic and theirs a re-living of His, then we may accommodate the words of St. Paul to the artistic order as well as the real: "I fill up what is wanting of the sufferings of Christ."

But first — to His agony. If we consider merely the dominant tone which is struck and held from the Last Supper to the final cry on the Cross, we are unmistakably caught up in a moment which has all the dimensions — the depth, the irony, the bleak inevitability — of tragedy. Against the lightsome foreground of the final banquet and the institution of the Eucharist, we glimpse flashes of darkness as each action is placed under that ironic impress of freedom and necessity which creates the unmistakable tragic tension. "The Son of Man indeed goeth as it is written of him. But woe to that man by whom the Son of Man shall be betrayed." The betrayer is dismissed with an equivocation at once

severe and tender which carries us forward into the high tide of mystery and suffering. "That which thou dost, do quickly." Then, to one side, as protagonist and antagonist come face to face before the consummation of the deed, "Is it I, Lord?" "Thou has said it."

If tragedy involves the mysterious wedding of action and passion, of freedom and ineluctable doom, then in the garden of Gethsemane the full stature of the tragic hero is revealed to us. "Sorrowful even unto death," He prays under the impact of a fear that induces a sweat of blood; prays to be delivered from that which is repugnant to nature. "Father, if it be possible, let this chalice pass from me." Yet submissively, and according to voluntary mandate, He adds: "Yet not what I will, but what thou wilt." Action and passion, freedom and necessity.

St. Augustine, commenting on that last cry upon the Cross, says:

Those who were crucified were tormented with a lingering death. But this did not happen to Christ since 'crying out with a loud voice, He yielded up His spirit.' Christ's spirit did not quit the flesh willingly, but because He willed it, when He willed it, and as He willed it. (*Trin. iv*)

"I will lay down my life, and take it up again." Where is the tragedy in this blunt asseveration of freedom and of perfect dominion over life and death? Where is the tragic onus of painful and invincible circumstance? Where else but on the Cross where the dying Savior cried out: "Eloi, eloi, lama sabachthani?" Which is interpreted: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" As St. Thomas points out, although Christ in the highest part of his soul was at that moment enjoying the beatific vision, his joy was dammed up; there was no redundancy, no overflow into the sensibility. Down below all was darkness and agony, so that He seemed to have been abandoned by God.

Nor is it irreverent to remark that the divine artist neglected nothing in the way of a shocking *mise en scene* for this tragic denouement, for He surrounded the death that followed with the full resonance of catastrophic sight and sound. Offstage, beyond Calvary, irrational nature itself revolts in one great significant percussion.

And behold the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth quaked and the rocks were rent, and the tombs were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep arose. (Matt. 27:51-52)

On what other ground could we withhold the name of tragedy from the central act of the Christian dispensation? Because our protagonist is too weak and placid? There are some who seem to agree with Butcher that in Christian tragedy we have a special sort of innocence, the "blameless goodness" of the Christian hero, too thin and unsubstantial to support the weight of tragedy, "immobile, uncombative . . . a figure of impersonal ardor in the cause of right." This may well be an accurate description of certain examples of second-rate religious art; it may be a sound description of the protagonist in any number of

inferior saints' plays. But it is a caricature of Christian sanctity with its virile paradox of strength and meekness, action and passion, freedom and necessity. We read in the account of the Passion that Christ "kept silent and made no answer." Yet two verses later we are told that He spoke out to the high priest in language so strong that Caiphas tore his garments to signify that a blasphemy had been uttered. Never for a moment is he merely pathetic, for He *wills* to submit to the passion. His misfortune, therefore, while certainly undeserved, is not "abominable" or "odious," as Aristotle expresses it in his description of the tragic decline of the man who is wholly innocent. There is, in fact, a certain proportion between evil and suffering in Christ, inasmuch as He took upon Himself the sins of the whole world. He assumes, as it were, a total tragic flaw and, having assumed it, suffers the inevitable tragic consequences. "This is your hour and the power of darkness."

While the passion of Christ is the primal exemplar for the working out of Christian tragedy, Mary and the saints are secondary exemplars and, by the same token, tragic subjects. We sometimes forget that among her many titles and privileges Mary is co-redemptrix and queen of martyrs and that her compassion represents the closest possible imitation of the Passion of Christ. It is truly a compassion in which she, in some mysterious way, goes down with her Son into the valley of the shadow of death, suffers with Him, and shares in the fruitfulness of the Passion as co-redemptrix. The Gospel account is curiously laconic here, governed by an artistic economy that tempts and draws the soul irresistibly. For we read, simply: "And there stood at the Cross of Jesus, Mary His mother." Yet are we not entitled to fill in this charcoal sketch with the psychic details supplied by those passages drawn out of the Old Testament and appropriated to the character and sacrificial destiny of Mary? So, from Isaiah:

An anguish hath token hold of me like the anguish of a woman in labor . . . I was troubled when I saw it. My heart failed; I was overwhelmed with darkness.

And from the Lamentations of Jeremias which are applied both to the Compassion of Mary and during Tenebrae to the Passion of Christ:

O, ye that pass by the way, attend, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, for he hath made a vintage of me . . . The Lord hath trodden the winepress for the Virgin daughter of Juda . . . the comforter, the relief of my soul is far from me. My children are desolate because the enemy hath prevailed.

There is justice here, too, and a kind of necessity. God is to be appeased by the God-Man, His own Son; the Son in turn, draws His mother into the most intimate purposes and obscurities of His redemptive life and death; draws her according to a free acceptance since all rests upon an original *fiat* which extends to every joyful or painful necessity of the salvific Will. "Be it done to me according to Thy Word."

As the passion of Christ is the primary exemplar for Christian tragedy and the compassion of Mary the secondary one, the sufferings of the Saints are final

and tertiary exemplars. In the true saint the tragic decline is set in motion by a combination of interior and exterior causes; exterior, as enemies, then friends, then loved ones turn against the saint through misunderstanding, fear, or satanic suasion; the interior, as under the operation of grace he comes to a terrifying consciousness of his own nothingness and his utter dependence on God, as creature and as sinner. "Abroad the sword destroyeth, and at home there is death alike." As in the case of the dying Christ, the lights and consolations from above are gradually extinguished (this is *Tenebrae*) and the soul looks upon itself as "a yawning grave" or "a sheet of lead," the home of confusion and waste and misery.

At the root of this decline is a tragic flaw, either a deficiency in self-knowledge or that nagging infidelity to grace which leaves the soul always chastened and alert. Add to this the sufferings which come to the saints in their role of victims for the unexpiated sins of others, plus the buffetings of Satan. Even the gentle soul of the Little Flower was not exempt from this last grim precept in the tragic law of human sanctification. She was dying, constantly asking for prayers.

If people only knew how necessary it is to pray for those in their agony . . . The devil is beside me. I do not see him but I feel him; he torments me, holding me with a grip of iron that I may not find one crumb of comfort, and adding to my sufferings that I may be driven to despair.

At the lowest depths of this spiritual desolation come the great temptations against faith, hope, and charity. So barren and abandoned is the soul in this penultimate state that salvation and the afterlife appear as dreams only, and mocking dreams. The soul is far, far from the joys of Richards' "compensating Heaven." In the serene aftermath of history and hagiography we can supply everything — the continued presence of God, the deepening of faith, the enormous patience. But the moment itself was all anguish, painful beyond our conceiving.

This is not to say that such a tragedy is notably stageworthy. If anything, the normal problems attending the portrayal of interior suffering are increased by the very rarity of these advanced spiritual states. But that is not the point. The point is that Christian suffering is *real* suffering and does create a tragic centre in the souls of the sanctified. They find themselves caught and held like graceless, gaping figures in a dream between two mysteries — the mystery of iniquity, on the one hand (the sword abroad and at home a kind of death), and, on the other, the ever-chastening mystery of the divine silence.

The real question here is whether we are not in a domain that is supra-tragic, beyond the scope of drama not for lack of pain and passion but by reason of the incommunicable depth and intensity of the pain. Yet if we avail ourselves of the authentic breadth of our definition of tragedy, we need not assume that only the loftiest crises of the spiritual life can afford material for Christian tragedy. There are, in fact, any number of situations which are brought into being or so modified by the Christian vision of life or so intensified by the probings of the Christian conscience that in the same breath, and for substantially the same

reason, we can call them Christian and tragic. Mr. Graham Greene has exploited one obvious locale of Christian gravity and grief in what we might call his tragedies of the purgative way: the soul drawn to God and virtue (continence, fidelity) yet drawn also, and more palpably, to the consolations of infidelity. Much more dramatizable, this crisis — because understood or even shared by more of one's audience. But are we justified in identifying it as material for "Christian" tragedy? I think we are because of the way in which the Christian conscience pulls and tugs and twists at the protagonist and, so to speak, makes the interior crisis which makes the tragedy. So powerful, in fact, is this type of psychic conflict, so close is it to modern sensibilities, and (note well) so eminently viable on the stage, that the Christian playwright might prudently be warned away from a concern with mystics and chosen souls and directed towards the more primitive crises of the purgative way.

At any rate, he will still be in the domain of Christian tragedy for it seems to me that all that is really required is that the tensions of his dramatic situation derive from or are significantly increased by the Christian view of life or the urgencies of Christian attitudes. It may be no great advance in our critical judgment to say that such and such a tragedy is "Christian." But it is not a misnomer and, more important for our purposes here, we need not fear that the name "Christian," whether applied to the spiritual crisis itself or to the work of art which reflects such a crisis, designates a spurious conflict or suffering that is really only sham suffering, its agony sedated by visions of glory and the glorified certitude of hope. "With fear and trembling work out your own salvation." This is the counterpoise to an immoderate Christian hope; in the work of art, moreover, it operates as balance and imbalance, and most certainly as a principle of artistic freedom. If God does not resolve a temporal destiny in any easy and absolute way, then neither can the artist. Knowing so much less than God, his artist's eye so feeble in its knowledge of the contingent singular, he will work mostly in the dark, content with a plot and even with a theme that may be all fear and trembling.

Yet it must be granted to those who doubt the authenticity of Christian tragedy that in the fullness of the Christian dispensation as joy may go before suffering, so glory succeeds it. "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things and so to enter into his glory?" Only in the predestinarian theology of a Calvin or a Barth does the tragic rhythm dominate or suppress every non-tragic element. A contemporary religious tragedy breathing forth the spirit of Barthian dogmatics might really be agnostic enough or Manichaean enough to satisfy the Richards' formula; but it would be only pseudo-Christian. At the same time a tragic tone that would be instinctively faithful to an orthodox dynamics might too easily betray the pull towards reconciliation, inclining to transcend the tragic. So that if we are thinking of the total design of the Christian redemptive process and of an art that will be adequate to it in its very totality, we cannot, it seems to me, rest in the tragic mode as absolute and final. The total rhythm of Christian life is not a tragic rhythm. Rather, it is something complex, like the rhythm of the Rosary, composed of alternating strains of joy, sorrow, and glory. To put it in another way, while the total Christian rhythm is not a tragic rhythm, it contains a tragic moment, and necessarily. This moment is not final, but it is

unique, distinct from the moment of transfiguration as the Passion is distinct from the Resurrection, and more than adequate to inspire an authentic tragic art. For a given artist, especially one preoccupied with the crisis in the purgative way, the tragic moment might be his only source of inspiration. Or, like Dante, in the fullness of his art he might construct an artifact equal to the diverse and complex whole.

It is difficult to say what title could be given to a dramatic form which would *adequately* imitate the full Christian cycle. Probably its true form would be neither tragedy nor comedy, but something akin to the *ipc*: a sort of heroic trilogy, perhaps, which would satisfy the alternating demands of joy, sorrow, and transfiguration. In this purely hypothetical form (which I am proposing only by way of illustration) the middle member alone would be a tragedy. The whole could not be, though tragic elements could enter every phase, as sorrow touches human life at every level this side of the grave. Whatever the total form, whatever the disposition of parts, the tragic content would be genuine, even under its fatal impress of hope. For such a hope need not bypass the tragic moment nor dissolve the tragic tension; rather would it transcend the tragic while still requiring it as a necessary phase in a dynamic cycle of human action.

(We) glory in the hope of the glory of the sons of God; but we glory also in tribulation, knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience trial, and trial hope; and hope confoundeth not.
(*Rom. 5:3-5*).

At just such a point as this and in just such a delicate enterprise criticism might go astray, the theologian forcing the artist along predestined paths or reading "moments" and "phases" into the ambiguous texture of the dramatic artifact. This is a danger, of course, but a danger one has to face whenever a judgment on content is called for; and the question of Christian tragedy cannot be discussed without a judgment on content. In truth, the task of the theologian is much simpler here than that of the artist whose sensibility may be only remotely governed by the imperious structure of Christian truth. Yet there is one great and compassionate thing the theologian can do in this matter. Convinced of the possibility of Christian tragedy and of the importance of exploring the areas of sin and suffering that evoke the tragic form, he can encourage the Christian artist to go down into the valley of the shadow of death, even unto Golgotha, the place of skulls.

What will the Christian artist describe there except the passage of the soul through whatever nights fall upon it in its mysterious yet meaningful journey to the grave? The death of the body, the death of the soul — who could know better than he how death stands round the Christian destiny in manifold forms: the death of overwhelming passion and desire; death by coldness and drowning as hostile waters extinguish charity in the soul; the bitter death of a life and destiny too small and mean for the Christian vision; death by hypocrisy, by *acedia*, by that terrible impatience with God which blights the existentialist ethos. Death beyond death, too — because the Christian artist stares down into the abyss of hell and may even be tempted to explore the most fearful of tragedies, the tragedy of the damned soul. He knows, too, a tragedy short of this

yet sharing in its anguish for he knows that those who do not pass through the dark night in this world will suffer its black and healing wounds in purgatorial fire.

My days have passed away, my thoughts are dissipated, tormenting my heart If I wait, hell is my house: and I have made my bed in darkness. I have said to rottenness: Thou art my father; to worms: my mother and my sister All that I have shall go down into the deepest pit. Thinkest thou that there at least I shall have rest?

It was not Hamlet who spoke these words, nor Medea, nor Oedipus after plucking out his eyes, nor Othello contemplating the foulness of his own deed. No, it was Job, the just one, and these very words are taken by Holy Mother Church and accommodated in the Office of the Dead to a description of the sufferings of purgatory. For Christian tragedy does not end with death; there is still a holy work to be done, painful beyond all concept of pain. We are being prepared for nothing less than the face-to-face vision of God and we dare not look upon Him until in a final ravishing catharsis we feel the tragic flaw of sin burnt out and say again with Job:

The flesh being consumed, my bone hath cleaved to my skin, and nothing but lips are left about my teeth. Have pity on me, have pity on me, at least you my friends, because the hand of the Lord hath touched me. (*Job 19:20-21*).

We ourselves, too, if we are wise, having appropriated from this literature what is suitable to us and akin to truth, will pass over the remainder.

St. Basil the Great in — *Address to
Young Men on Reading Greek Literature*

THE GODMASK OF MacLEISH

By LEONARD CASPER

American critics, apparently having already forgotten Maxwell Anderson and having capitulated to T. S. Eliot's *de facto* British citizenship, have invested their hopes for a unique and lasting poetic splendor in MacLeish's new play, *J.B.* On the basis of its Yale production, it is predicted a certain winner of next year's Pulitzer prize in poetry and/or drama. The breath of eternity is on our times; and critics, no less than publics everywhere, seem desperately trying to insure their own immortality, vicariously, through their spokesmen's. Their profuse fondness for *J.B.*, therefore, which calls on God to justify Himself, so high a hero does it make of man, is only to be expected.

Although religious themes are in favor again among lay writers, the approach is seldom direct, with the result that contemporary theology in art runs thin. Typically, for MacLeish's audience, Job is a contemporary banker with a New England wife. Or rather, these two are characters in a circus sideshow, cued and directed by Zuss (Zeus) and Nickles (Old Nick), fellow vendors of moods and ideas. The light bulbs in the cosmic tent are stars. Here are enough trappings for a medieval morality. What marked the secularization of drama in the early days of the Renaissance and made it memorable was the translation into recognizable local event of those truths of past or universal circumstances which otherwise were too remote, as metaphysical abstraction or simply forgotten fact. MacLeish's choice of a circus frame for his play, however, is too much a cliché — man, the quotidian clown; the grease paint mystery unmasked — to provide that same kind of immediacy. And his other devices for reconstructing the timeless *now* (as Thornton Wilder succeeded in doing in *The Skin of Our Teeth*) are equally defective.

Figures in the show-within-the-show are taken for granted; there is little characterization. *J.B.* is a banker in name only, just so that he will have wealth to lose; his children too are mere stage properties, present largely so that he can be deprived of them. Circumstantial realism, the context of credibility, is negligible. The language, therefore, finds itself so reduced in function that tricks of alliteration and a few metaphors adequately serve the play's progress; high poetry is seldom required. After Zuss in his Godmask finally allows Nickles to test, through his children, *J.B.*'s utter trust in God's goodness, the play becomes episodic and predictable: when David dies a soldier's death, when Mary and Jonathan are killed by a drunken driver, when Rebecca is found dead as a result of criminal assault, when Ruth's body is dug out from the ruins of *J.B.*'s bank (news of such calamities comes second hand; it is not staged), *J.B.*'s wife, Sarah, denounces and he blesses God, though he is dazed and hardly hopes to hope. There is repetition to the point of anti-dramatic formula, unrelieved by the discovery of increasingly magnified human reserve in the person of *J.B.* as his family dwindles. His stoic faith seems less and less the sign of inner assurance

and more of conditioned reflex. The grandeur of the original Job's lament would be foreign to this close-mouthed Yankee, whose soul seldom speaks, to witness his suffering.

No wonder then that after J.B.'s deference to the voice in the whirlwind, his character is still so ambiguous that Zuss and Nickles can interpret him at will, for the edification of the audience. The previous nine scenes have been not so much *preparation as occasion* for this dialogue. From the start, Nickles, a rebel himself, has admired man and hoped that J.B. would be too proud to be downtrodden by God. Zuss was equally sure that J.B. would never forget the Power and Glory which made his presence possible. Now, although Zuss seems to have bettered his antagonist, he is disturbed by the arrogance implicit in J.B.'s humility: as if a man had forgiven God his undeserved punishment — "As though Job's sufferings were justified/ Not by the Will of God but Job's/ Acceptance of God's Will." Sarah, who with all the rest of his world is restored to J.B., puts it somewhat differently in the last scene: the wonder is that man can love God who is, but does not love. Previously, she has unwittingly agreed with Nickles, that the ways of God are justified to Job by making Job feel guilty in God's stead.

After the occasion passes for MacLeish's handsome hero-worship of man, God and man have no more words for one another; and J.B. and his wife end the play, blowing on the coals of each other's heart (still in search of knowledge despite the whirlwind's words) with all the hand-holding half-fear of Matthew Arnold's lovers watching the Sea of Faith ebb from Dover Beach.

For the undiscerning and undemanding, J.B. will be consoling. It makes God man's scapegoat by claiming that man has always been God's; it argues that man is the more admirable for being not only less guilty than God, but more loving as well.

For others, J.B. will raise ponderable questions. Does J.B. actually love, or first trust and then fear his God? If he loves, is it the love of oversight — forgiveness, which presumes some divine crime — or of gratitude? (J.B. says earlier, during the Thanksgiving dinner, "The thanks are/ Part of Love and paid like love . . .") Above all, would such questions exist and would Scene 10, in which Zuss and Nickles in a sense from *outside* the inner drama explicate its meaning, be necessary if J.B. had been intimately characterized through the course of the play? Are these two not last-minute apparatuses by which MacLeish, turned desperate by his own doubts, contrives to make a hero out of J.B.? And does this use of *force majeure*, however shrewd its showmanship, not contradict the human spirit which he commends, self-made and subordinate to none? Finally, can such deception still be called legitimate theatrical illusion?

THE MIRACLE PLAY IN AMERICA: AN ASPECT OF FOLK THEATRE

By LIONEL D. WYLD

An an evolving and creative art form, the "folk-play" in America can be dated from the impact in this country of the Irish dramatic renaissance. Other factors, rooted in native soil, contributed of course. Hints of a regional drama may be found as early as the 1850's in plays in which characters asserted a sectional consciousness and regional pride. At universities like North Dakota, North Carolina, and Cornell, the folk-play became a genre for serious cultivation. Mary Austen, E. P. Conkle, Lynn Riggs, Paul Green, Weldon Stone, and Percy MacKaye gave the movement impetus; O'Neill, Sherwood, Heyward, and Connelly helped it to Broadway recognition. But one aspect of American folk-theatre — the miracle play, traced from Spanish-Catholic origins — antedates all of these, and, in a very real sense, provides an index of a more subtle and less sophisticated art form that is undeniably both "folk" and "drama."¹

The culture of the southwestern United States is richly composed of materials of an indigenous Indian civilization and a transplanted Spanish one, the former uniquely and natively American, the latter a heritage compounded of Old World antecedents in art and literature and an abiding, dauntless Christian faith as brought to the New World and implanted by the Catholic friars and missionaries.

The American Indian of the early frontier, from New England through the Midwest, had found his place in dramatic literature in a manner, held for over a century, echoing the "noble savage" concept of Rousseau. Even from earliest colonial times, while the natives were yet feared and their war whoops a constant challenge, the attempts to plant the Indian on the stage generally resulted in his being highly romanticized. Naturally enough, chieftains and other Indian heroes who figured prominently in American history — such as Pontiac and Pocahontas — were constant traffic.² No attempt was made, however, to present the Indian in an ordinary, realistic manner: he remained for exhibition, a cigar-store figure, transferred to the stage for dramatic purposes. His culture, his myths and religion, his life in general, were avoided.

¹ The term "folk-drama" is one of multiple and mixed meanings. Broadly, it has come to denote three general types of folk activities: a) the mummer play which dramatized ballad heroes and romantic figures, of which slight reminiscences can be found, e.g., in *Madi Gras*; b) the Biblical pageant play or "miracle," which persists in the Spanish Southwest; and c) the relatively recent regional folk-play, depicting life realistically and within a highly unified culture-pattern. See Felix Sper, *From Native Roots* (Caldwell, Idaho, 1948). Sper's book covers the development of regional drama extensively.

² The lineage of the stage Indian can be traced to Robert Rogers' *Ponteach; or the Savages of America* (1766); an Ottawa chief, Ponteach was the first Indian to appear in an American play. The first acted play on Indian life was James N. Barker's *The Indian Princess*; or *La Belle Sauvage* (1808), from Captain Smith's *General Historie of Virginia*. For the early history see Sper, *op cit.*, and Arthur H. Quinn, a *History of American Drama* . . . (var. eds. from 1927), long a standard sourcebook.

Mary Austen gave us our first authentic Indian plays, and, as a result, opened up a vast new aspect not only of folk or regional drama, but of American culture in the main. Perhaps because of the entire trend in drama toward a realism already evident in the other arts, coupled with her personal sensibilities to the true feelings of the "original Americans," Mary Austen's were the first to plead for an understanding of the Indian on his own ground. More significantly for our present study, her interest in the Southwest — in the Indian lore and in the pageants, plays and processions of the Church she found there — proved of considerable value to the field of research into the Indian and Spanish contribution to American culture.³

The deposit of Spanish religious drama, particularly, has provided a literary heritage unquestionably an important facet of American civilization. The "folk," annually enacting centuries-old plays of the Nativity, and presenting pageants and feasts which have been handed down from generation to generation through oral tradition, evidence a link with the early religious drama of Spain. Many of them preserve the form and versification of the classic drama of the Sixteenth Century, the Golden Age of Spanish literature.

The Nativity plays are popularly revived yearly during the traditional Spanish-Catholic Christmas season, lasting from December 16 to January 6. During the nine nights before Christmas, *Las Posadas* (The Shelter, or The Inns) may be witnessed in numerous towns and villages throughout the area of Spanish dominance, and the cycle is generally ended with *Los Reyes Magos* (The Magi Kings) on January 6.

Representative of the celebrations throughout the region are the religious activities in New Mexico where during the Christmas season *El Coloquio de San Jose*, *Las Posadas*, *Los Pastores*, and *Los Reyes Magos* are presented. The first play dramatizes the choice of St. Joseph as the husband of the Virgin Mary.⁴

This play is usually followed by a quasi-drama or religious custom known as *Pas Poasadas*, *The Inns*, presented in some vicinities on nine separate nights, at others, during one evening. The theme is the search of Joseph and Mary for shelter in Bethlehem at the time of the enrollment 'because there was no room for them at the inn.' The protagonists seek shelter at nine different homes When the players reach the ninth house, over the door of which a lantern is hung as a symbol of hospitality, and as an indication that there is 'room at the inn,' the owner becomes the host and entertains Joseph, Mary, and the Chorus of Seekers In some localities *Los Pastores* is presented immediately after *Las Posadas*. The order of production differs in different localities.

³ A wealth of personal commentary and assembled material witness Mary Austen's enthusiasm and effort in the field. See *Earth Horizon*, an autobiography (New York, 1932). She authored numerous plays and articles on the Southwest.

⁴ Sister Joseph Marie (McCrossan), *The Role of the Church and the Folk in the Development of the Early Drama in New Mexico* (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 1948), p. 103.

Los Tres Reyes Magos brings the Christmas cycle to a close. It is not quite so popular as *Los Pastores*, nor so regularly presented, although there is always some town or village in which it is performed periodically.⁵

In the Christmas cycle, *Los Pastores* appears as the paramount "dramatization" of the Holy Season. Captain John G. Bourke, a Philadelphian and graduate of West Point, interested in the ethnology of the American Indian of the Southwest, witnessed a performance of the medieval miracle play in 1891 in Rio Grande City, Texas.⁶ Two years later, Bourke watched the same play presented in San Antonio, and secured photographs and sound recordings which he subsequently turned over to the American Folklore Society at a meeting of the Boston Branch in 1902. Bourke's interest and pioneering in this area led to a study of *Los Pastores* by M. R. Cole, who made a translation under the auspices of the American Folklore Society, and published the play — together with his commentaries and photographs originally taken by Captain Bourke — in 1907.⁷

A precis, by Sister Joseph Marie (McCrossan), taken from the version procured by Bourke and published by Cole in the Society's *Memoirs*, provides a thorough picture of *Los Pastores*:

Los Pastores has for its theme the story of the birth of Christ and the coming of the shepherds to Bethlehem. The principal characters in the play are: St. Michael; Lucifer; Bato, the Head Shepherd; Bartolo, the Lazy Shepherd; Gila, the Shepherdess; and the Hermit. In the opening scene the shepherds sing a Christmas hymn; later, Lucifer appears, and in a long soliloquy expresses his uneasiness concerning the coming of the Messiah. A Hermit joins the shepherds to seek food and shelter, and to learn if they have heard the news of the promised Redeemer. The shepherds pitch camp for the night, and while Bato is assigning each his special duty, an angel suddenly appears to warn the group against . . . Lucifer. When the angel has disappeared, Lucifer, disguised as a traveller, asks shelter for the night. The Hermit, sensing that all is not well, demands Lucifer's name. In a long speech which bears the marks of the lofty style of the Golden Age of Spanish Drama, Lucifer addresses the Hermit, giving an account of his fall and threatening the Messiah and all His followers. Just as the Hermit and the frightened shepherds are about to leave, the angel reappears and drives Lucifer away.

Gila prepares supper for the group. Cucharon, a shepherd lad who has been sent to guard the flock, returns excitedly to tell the shepherds he has seen Lucifer. Suddenly, strains of music are

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 103-107 *passim*.

⁶ John G. Bourke, "The Miracle Play of the Rio Grande," *The Journal of American Folklore*, VI (April, 1893), pp. 89-95.

⁷ M. R. Cole, *Los Pastores: A Mexican Play of the Nativity*. Vol. IX of *Memoirs of the American Folklore Society* (Boston, New York and London, 1907). For the text and melodies associated with *Los Pastores*, see the recent article by J. D. Robb, "The Music of *Los Pastores*," *Western Folklore*, XVI (October, 1957), pp. 263-280.

heard as the Herald Angel appears . . . to announce the birth of the Saviour. After a long denunciatory speech, the Angel drives Lucifer to eternal punishment. When peace is restored to the camp, the shepherds journey to the stable at Bethlehem. Upon arriving, each shepherd sings a verse of a hymn and offers a simple gift to the Christ Child. Bartolo, the lazy one, refuses to leave his soft bed, but the other shepherds carry him off by force. After Bartolo's offering, which is even more fervent than that of the others who have chided him, the shepherds sing the traditional song of *Despedida* or Farewell.⁸

In different localities other religious plays are found, presented at various times during the year. A Passion Play survives, performed by the *Penitentes* at their chapels; while not sanctioned by the Church, the plays "were undoubtedly used by the missionaries in the Colonial days, then were taken over by the Folk, and later made a part of the expiatory practices of the *Penitent Brothers*." Feasts, rooted in missionary endeavor, are everywhere in evidence, the results of a one-time vigorous missionary program which fostered the traditional feast-day celebrations. *El Nino Perdido* appears as a Lenten play, sometimes in the fall as well. *La Aparicion de Nuestra Senora de Guadalupe*, while not a Christmas play, "has become associated with the Christmas season because of the proximity of the feast to Christmas, and of the fact that it is a play about a shepherd."⁹

The drama is based on the story of the miraculous appearance of the Blessed Virgin to an Indian shepherd boy, Juan Diego, on the hill of Tepeyac in Mexico, and of the miracle Our Lady performed by reproducing her image in gold, rose, and azure on the inside of the shepherd's *tilma* to vindicate the boy before the Bishop who doubted the story of the vision.¹⁰

Behind the survival of such plays stand the forces which effected the transition of the material from its originators in Spain — or in the early Colony — to the Folk who have faithfully preserved it. Faith, itself, is doubtless a large part of the reason for the survival, for the double motif of "Church and Culture" or "Church and Civilization" resounds throughout the long period of Spanish influence; faith, too, which was capable of sustaining long after the Inquisitional decrees had lifted, garbed the folk productions of the plays in a cloth of reverent love.

Left to themselves, the people, many of whom were the hardy descendants of Onate, or de Vargas, took their religion into their homes . . . They took the religious plays into their hearts and memories, and taught them by word of mouth to the younger

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 109. See also Eric R. Wolf, "The Virgin of Guadalupe: a Mexican National Symbol," *Journal of American Folklore*, LXXI (January-March 1958), pp. 34-35.

⁹ Sister Joseph Marie, *op cit.*, p. 94.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 109.

members of the community, for in the early days there were not even manuscript copies of the plays. In the event that the missionary could not be present for the Midnight Mass at a particular town or village at Christmas time, the folk staged a performance of *Los Pastores* . . . If the Lenten season left them without special services, they continued the tradition of the *Passion Play* . . . Religious plays were being produced all over the Spanish-speaking world at that time, and . . . New Spain merely kept up the universal Spanish custom.¹¹

Important contributions have been made by numerous folklorists, drama-enthusiasts and scholars tilling the soil of the American Southwest. Sister Joseph Marie (McCossan), whose study for the University of Pennsylvania provided an invaluable guide to the folk drama of New Mexico, exemplifies pioneering scholarship in folk materials. Mary Austen's contribution has already been cited, and her significant collection of folk materials is today a part of the Laboratory of Anthropology at Santa Fe. Scholars of the American Folklore Society and of universities throughout the South and West have been and are engaged in studying and in analyzing the field.¹²

A recognition of the deep-rooted folk traditions shaping the nation's literature and culture must dismiss the long-held adverse criticism based on a supposed American inexperience. Regional drama, drawing lessons from surviving traditions and utilizing folk idiom, concerns itself with the innate dramatic potential of the common man. In preface to *Green Grow the Lilacs*, Lynn Riggs expressed this felt-need to "throw away the conventions of ordinary theatricality," to "try to exhibit luminously, in the simplest of stories, a wide range of mood and feeling."

This could be done . . . by exploring the characters as deeply as possible, simple though they appeared to be, hoping to stumble on, if lucky, the always subtle, always strange compulsion under which they labor and relate themselves to the earth and to other people.¹³

And, at the University of North Carolina, the Caroline Playmakers discovered, under the guidance of Frederick H. Koch, the appeal of folk theatre:

We have cherished the locality, believing that if the locality were interpreted faithfully, it might show us the way to the universal. For if we can see the lives of those about us with understanding — with imagination — why may we not interpret the life in significant images for all? It was so with the Greeks before

11 *Ibid.*, p. 94.

12 See, e.g., Aurelio M. Espinosa, Jr., "The Field of Spanish Folklore in America," *Southern Folklore Quarterly*, V:1 (March 1941); Sister Joseph Marie, *op. cit.*, pp. 12-24, cites many others.

13 Lynn Riggs, *Green Grow the Lilacs* (New York and Los Angeles, 1945), p. vii.

us, and with our English forbears. It has been so in all lasting art. It should be so for us here in America.¹⁴

The persistent survival in the American Southwest of the miracle play, as folk-art with classical antecedents, is of obvious significance for the history of American folk theatre. As popular survivals, they take their place beside the more sophisticated, dramatist-created folk theatre forms which try to incorporate or to imitate the ways of the folk.

Whatever the significance of the various elements of folk drama, the significance in the aggregate is one in relation to American culture in its broadest aspects. Wherever the primary attention in considering folk drama should be centered — in the pageants such as the Mummers of Philadelphia, the Mardi Gras of the Creoles, and the Mormon celebrations at Palmyra; in the academically-inspired writing of folk plays at Chapel Hill, at Cornell, and elsewhere; or in the survival through folk tradition of the religious drama of the Southwest — there can be little doubt that America's folk drama has assisted immeasurably in our coming to a literary and cultural independence. At the same time, cultural *interdependence*, often found in tracing folk relationships, is establishable as well. Any consideration of American folk theatre must include a prime acknowledgment to that which, in the Southwest, is "perhaps the oldest folk tradition in the United States today, the survival of medieval mystery plays in twentieth century America."¹⁵

14 *The Carolina Play-Book*, XVII:1 (Commemorative Issue, 1945), p. 77. Koch, who has been called the "father of folk-drama in America," organized the Carolina Playmakers in 1919, after having founded the Dakota Playmakers of the University of North Dakota. See *Pioneering a People's Theatre*, ed. by Archibald Henderson (Chapel Hill, 1945).

15 Sister Joseph Marie, *op. cit.*, p. vii.

THE CHORUS OF THE NATIONAL GREEK THEATRE

By SARA LEE STADELMAN

Epidavros' ancient amphitheatre, built in the 4th century B.C., is a thing of beauty, wonder, excitement. It is rooted in its surrounding hills with all the virile dignity characteristic of Greek architecture at its best.

At a little after six in the first blue of evening eager stragglers search for choice seats. By seven-thirty fifteen thousand spectators are gathered to watch the National Greek Theatre perform one of the dramas which have brought it international recognition.

Under zealous direction the Greek Theatre has accomplished a stupendous work in its comparatively short existence.¹ During the summer of 1958 it presented six plays: five tragedies and one comedy.² It has a split season, first performing at Epidavros and then at the Odeon Herodes in Athens. The Greek people are proud of their National Theatre and foreigners are equally impressed and appreciative. Unfortunately the enthusiasm engendered by seeing great drama produced in such exquisite settings prevents both professional critics and the devoted public from a discriminating attitude that would be helpful to the National Greek Theatre and the art which it serves.

In order to pinpoint my criticism, I shall deal primarily with the Chorus of the National Theatre, concerning myself with only two of the season's dramas, Euripides' "Medea" and Sophocles' "Oedipus Rex." Both of these tragedies were staged by Alexis Minotis and choreographed by Tatiana Varouti.³

The entrance of the tragic female chorus in "Medea" was the play's most dramatic moment. Fifteen women walked double-file through the parodos and circled the orchestra to the heavy accompaniment of drums and gongs. There was a promise of marvelous things to come in their simple stride and direct approach. The promise was never fulfilled.

From the first, a deadly monotony hung over the chorus' speech and movement; neither was ever exploited in relation to the drama. The chorus never succeeded in mirroring the struggle of a woman torn by passion, it never fore-

¹ Originated as Royal Theatre in 1901, reorganized as National Greek Theatre in 1931.

² Euripides' "Iphigenia in Tauris" and "Iphigenia in Aulis," and "Medea"; Sophocles' "Oedipus Rex" and "Oedipus Colonus"; Aristophanes' "The Thesmophorians."

³ Costis Michailidis staged "Iphigenia" and Alexis Solomos staged "The Thesmophorians." Various individuals worked with the chorus and received much miscellaneous billing as "Supervisor," "Dancing Instructor," "Assistant Choreographer" (to the staging director).

Sara Lee Stadelman, recently returned from Greece, is well known for her work in Theatre and Dance. She will join the faculty of the Speech and Drama Department at Mercy College, Detroit, Michigan in January.

shadowed the ensuing tragedies, it did not even sustain the action. It was limp and static – and – unobtrusive. But that is not the function of the Greek chorus.

H. D. F. Kitto remarks, "We must not forget that the Greeks were southerners. The serenity of Greek art, the poise of the Greek mind, and the safe Greek doctrine of the Golden Mean, encourage perhaps the idea that the Greek was an untroubled and passionless creature; and the idea is perhaps reinforced by conceptions drawn from seventeenth- and eighteenth-century neo-classicism, and conceivably from modern performances of Greek plays, in which dimly-robed women gather in sculptural groups on the stage and recite in artificial and rather embarrassing unison, a lot of lugubrious mythology. It is all wrong. Nothing that does not quiver with controlled excitement is Classical Greek."⁴

No more pertinent criticism can be made of the present National Greek Theatre productions.

At the chorus' first entrance Medea is heard from within the palace crying,

"Ai, ai!
Would that a flash from heaven might cleave through
My brain! . . .
Woe, woe! Would now that in death I could end
This abhorred living hell and be rid of it!"

and the group of women answer,

"Heardest thou? – O Zeus! O Earth! O Light! –
What a fierce wild dirge broke forth
From the hapless wife!"⁵

This is the moment perhaps for a "fierce wild dirge" of power and beauty? But what do we see! We see a mild exchange of groupings, a banal rotation of heads (first to the right and then to the left and then to the right again), and a tame shifting of weight from one foot to another is to be repeated *ad nauseam* in all the National Greek Theatre productions.

Originally the primitive dirge was sung, as indeed was all the choral commentary. It also was accompanied with an ecstatic dance in which the women beat their breasts and tore their hair. Such a literal interpretation was undoubtedly not performed in Euripides' time, and obviously we would not find it acceptable in our more "civilized" societies today. But the savage quality of grief expressed by an interested group of women is demanded by the drama⁶ and would enhance the action that should normally develop as the play builds.

4 THE GREEKS – H.D.F. Kitto, 249.

5 Trans. R. C. Trevelyan.

6 Yes, and by a dramatist who presented women as flesh-and-blood people.

Instead the chorus declaims in breathy tones, the women walking from one formation to another to achieve pictorial effects. Periodically, the Leader emerges to speak her piece and the chorus shifts its weight from one foot to another — in what we must now consider “stylized” movement — to punctuate a question here, an answer there.

The simplest form of canon movement is neglected; oppositional movement is seldom explored; contrapuntal movement is never used. Paxinou, as Medea, soliloquizes with melodramatic passion, and the chorus serves as a pretty background of well-bred finishing-school girls.



MEDEA — Euripides

“A tame shifting of weight from one foot to another that is to be repeated . . . in all the National Greek Theatre productions.”

Yet drama is the result of tensions, of contrasting forces. Euripides’ “Medea” is loaded with tension, contrast, force, but when Medea resolves to poison Jason’s bride — certainly a high point in the tragedy’s structure — the chorus’ frail on-the-walk beat impedes the gathering momentum of the play. It is nothing more than an appendage to a work that needs no accessories.

The same passivity is characteristic of each of the five choral extensions. Medea’s banishment by Creon, Aegus’ acceptance of her plan to flee to him at Athens, her resolution to murder her children and the final news that she has accomplished her goal is received with the same phlegm.

In Sophocles' "Oedipus Rex," the patterns and linear design showed a little more freshness, but once again the chorus kept a deadly even beat that failed to catch the thrilling tempo of the poetry. Here, as in all of the Greek drama of the 5th and early 4th centuries, B.C., "the choral poems were never written in a fixed measure, but in most varying meters that changed constantly within a single verse, often from line to line.⁷ This rhythmical liberty offers the director and choreographer thrilling opportunities for creative dance movements of which, oddly enough, the National Greek Theatre seems unaware.



MEDEA — Euripides

"At the tragedy's most curdling crises, the chorus luxuriates in nineteenth-century clichés . . ."

Miss Hamilton in her discussion of the choral poem goes on to explain that, "Greatly as the lines . . . vary, each has its own strongly marked rhythm . . . They are unmistakably metrical," and she adds, "the Greek was free to vary his rhythmic measure . . . Emotions could be expressed by meters as well as by words; if a poem changed from grief to joy, from tranquillity to passion, it was to be expected that the meter would change too."⁸

I am quoting from Miss Hamilton, not to attack the "Medea" and "Oedipus Rex" choruses for not being in rhythm — the gods know they were always on the beat! — but rather to lament the fact that their dance movements were always,

⁷ THREE GREEK PLAYS — Edith Hamilton.

⁸ *Ibid.*

or nearly always, in rhythm with the meters of the choral poem, thereby reducing the impact of the tragedies' content and belittling the effect of the chorus.

Throughout "Oedipus Rex," the chorus asks such questions as,

"Who is the man proclaimed
by Delphi's prophetic rock
as the bloody-handed murderer,
the doer of deeds that none dare name?"

or,

"When such things are done, what man shall contrive
to shield his soul from the shafts of God?
When such deeds are held in honour,
why should I honour the Gods in the dance?"⁹

but there is no corresponding agony in the conventional posturings of the dancers. It is true that several times the chorus kneeled or sat to indicate despair or pleading, but the positions were assumed with the natural hesitancy of performers who have not had sufficient body training. The only agony that was evident to me was the discomfort of the actors, who, as instruments, were neither physically nor psychologically prepared to motivate their movements.

Many explanations have been given to me for the inadequacy of the chorus choreography and its execution: insufficient budget for superior training, lack of qualified personnel, favoritism in hiring and firing, dictatorial demands of the directors, and most important, the "policy" conviction of the present organization that the chorus does not and should not *dance* in Greek drama because dancing "interrupts the tragedy!"

One, none, several, or all of these reasons may be valid, but obviously the critic will feel that the present chorus is treated as if it bears no resemblance to persons living or dead. Either the chorus should be discarded or it should be used indigenously to the drama.

The agony that is Oedipus Rex' cleanly mounts from climax to climax in the rush of Sophocles' story, but the chorus does not reflect these dramatic heights. When it hears the prophecy from the Delphic oracle, when it witnesses the quarrel between Oedipus and Teiresias, when it questions Jocasta, when its fears are confirmed that Oedipus has unwittingly killed his father and married his mother, when it learns of Jocasta's suicide and sees Oedipus' self-inflicted blindness, how does the chorus react?

At the tragedy's most curdling crises, the chorus luxuriates in nineteenth-century clichés — staggering, pressing its hands to faces and foreheads, gesticulating in a manner that is inorganic and uncreative. Its movement is, in fact, romantic.

⁹ Trans. David Greene.

It is my conviction that the present romantic misuse of the chorus springs, perhaps unconsciously, from the historical fact that Greek independence was born when romanticism was at its peak in Europe. The claim that Greece adopted this romanticism and all the currents that followed it are validated not only in the choreography of the National Greek Theatre, but to a large degree, in all contemporary Greek art.

The choral lyric was a heritage from tribal times and it is structurally archaic, more archaic than the drama which was characteristic of fifth century democracy. That the chorus was preserved in the drama, even though its role fluctuated with time and became increasingly less effective in late Euripidean drama, indicates its tremendous importance to Greek theatre.

The chorus' initial function was one of empathy. It served as the imaginative projection for the audience's consciousness and at the same time as a projection for the character's stream-of-consciousness within the drama. It was and should be a bridge on which the emotional energies of actors and audience can meet.

If the chorus is to be used today, it must retain its primitive characteristics. It must extricate itself from the romantic. It must be indigenous to the drama which it serves. If the play calls for lyric expression, the speech and movement must soar lyrically. If explosive expression is demanded, the director must allow the speech and movement to explode.

Levels must be explored; levels of action, of emotion, of speech, of volume, of rhythm, of magic.

Greek drama is not polite. It is epic theatre, realism grown "soul-sized." The director can neither stand in awe of the chorus nor hope to "keep it in its place" by making it an acceptable "part" of the drama.

The Greek director certainly knows better. He knows that the chorus is not subordinate to the actor but is equal to the actor.

Originally there was no dichotomy between the actor and the chorus. The chorus spoke and moved simultaneously. As the dialogue increased in the fifth century and the stature of the speaker increased accordingly, the chorus assumed, not a less important role, but a different role. In the first instance they were the only performers. Later they and the actors performed ensemble — *together*. The chorus was not meant to serve as an addenda.

There is a dramatic void when the chorus stops its action to speak or sing. It is an unnecessary waste of dramatic energy to force these artificial divisions. A well-trained group can intensify the drama with co-ordinated speech and movement. In the hands of a director-choreographer the chorus can capture its initial role and hold its rightful place as the mouthpiece of the author and as a link between the actor and the audience.

Kito writes, "The dialogue-scenes give us no trouble: they are dramatic enough. It is what happens between them that chills the



OEDIPUS REX — Sophocles

"Several times the male chorus kneeled or sat to indicate despair or pleading . . ."

blood: the elegant groups of maidens or old men reciting Swinburne, all at once. Those who find this dull should not blame the Greeks: they would not have endured it for five minutes. These choral odes were never spoken, but always sung: not only were they sung but they were also *danced*: and not only were they danced — as indeed they sometimes are in modern revivals — but they were danced on a circular dancing floor nearly ninety feet in diameter . . . to try to reconstruct it from the few representations on vase-paintings is most hazardous, for the reason that vase-painters knew nothing and cared less about perspective: if they show a frieze-like procession that only means that a frieze-like procession made an effective decoration on a vase, not that the dance looked like this. But we have the metre of the poetry, and that gives us at least the rhythm, and, as it were, the ground-floor plan of the music and the dance: and from these it is perfectly obvious that the dances are eloquent, varied, and where necessary, tumultuous.¹⁰

A dance floor of huge diameter such as the exquisite Epidavros amphitheatre provides! A dance floor that cries to be used! An area where leaping and turning, and jumping and falling, might — within the bounds of the drama and the demands of the script—effect dances that are “eloquent, varied . . . tumultuous.”¹¹

I have no doubt that the directors of the National Greek Theatre feel that they have accomplished their aim as stated in their program catalogue where they claim it is their wish to present “ancient tragedy as a living organism . . . which is in direct contact and relation with the continuous flow of life from the past to the present.” If, however, they take a good second look at their own words they must admit that their approach to dance choreography for Greek poetic drama needs revision. To quote the program again, “Even if an archeological performance could be considered as practically achievable — which is very improbable — it would be useless As regards the dancing, it must be *derived from and defined by the emotional situations contained in the text and not artificially composed.*” Here is their challenge, a challenge formulated by themselves, a challenge, which when faced with genuine artistic courage, will free them from the romantic fetishes from which they now suffer. The monumentality of Greek poetic drama cannot be made to fit into the fragile framework of romanticism. The content of the great Greek poets cannot successfully be poured into such a limited form. The two are incompatible.

THE DEATH OF FALSTAFF: GREEN FIELDS ONCE MORE

By R. J. SCHOECK

To Dr. Leslie Hotson's recent conjecture that Falstaff deliriously believed himself in a historic sea-fight, many have already taken exception; I should like to join in disagreeing but on rather different grounds from those already presented. No one has yet noted that *green fields* apparently echoes a passage from the well-known Elizabethan *Booke of Christian Prayers of 1578*.¹ Under the rubric of 'A Prayer to be said in time of sickness' there is this passage: "that I may, with thy faithful servant Job, and with unfeigned lips and heart say, The Lord hath given, the Lord hath taken away; as it hath pleased the Lord, so is it come to pass: blessed be the name of the Lord." And there is this marginal:²

The Herald.

Herald, in thy shield
bear grass in greenfield.

(p. 532)

Again, under the 'Litany and Suffrages,' opposite the text of "O God, the Son, Redeemer of the world, have mercy upon us, miserable sinners," there is the same marginal notation:³

The Herald.

Herald, in thy shield
bear grass in green field.

(p. 548)

The Booke of Christian Prayers is drawn from the earlier *Christian Prayers* of 1569, of which Helen White (who has shown us once more and in a clearer light the richness and popularity of the tradition of the Tudor books of devotion⁴)

NOTES

1 *A Booke of Christian Prayers collected out of the auncient writers, and best learned in our tyme, worthy to be read with an earnest mynde of all Christians, in these daungerous and troublesome dayes, that God for Christes sake will yet still be mercifull unto us.* London: Iohn Daye, 1578. (Reprinted by the Parker Society, 1841, from which edition I quote.)

2 This marginal is apparently first used in another of the prayers from the Fifteen Oes, 'A Prayer to Christ ascending and reigning in glory' (on p. 515, opposite the text: "pluck us up from the earth, and earthly things.").

The traditional symbolism of grass should need no glossing, but perhaps this brief passage from a later prayer may be cited: "All flesh is grass, and all the glory thereof is as the flower of the field. The grass withereth away, and the flower fadeth, because the breath of the Lord hath blown upon it . . . Such as that part of our life hath been, which is forespent, such will the residue be, or rather, much worse through default of age: not that God created it such, but we (through our own folly) do convert it to ill uses" (p. 541).

For purposes of this brief note, no distinction has been made between prayers and meditations.

3 Cf. *Modern Philology*, xlix (May, 1952), 279-81.

4 Helen C. White, *The Tudor Books of Private Devotion* (1951), p. 191.

has written that "while this is unmistakably a Protestant book, it is still strikingly reminiscent of the Primer."⁵ That Daye's *Booke of Christian Prayers* was a popular compilation may easily be learned from the S.T.C., which lists editions in 1578, 1581, 1590, and 1608. We need not be surprised, then, that Shakespeare might have summoned up from a remembrance of these prayers the phrase *green field* and that he would have employed it dramatically.

For within the dramatic situation of the Hostess' speech this evocation adds tellingly to the irony and total significance. We know her character and type, of course; we are amused rather than shocked by her saying that Falstaff is in Arthur's bosom (see Whalley's note on this). "A" made a finer end, and went away, an it had been any crustom child": certainly if Falstaff had been thinking of the prayers suggested by the marginal, he would have made a fine end, a good death — does this not call to mind the unconscious irony with which Ophelia says of her father that "They say 'a made a good end"? And there is further irony in the simple Hostess' statement that when he cried out, "God, God, God!" three or four times — a part of his fine end — she, to comfort him bid him not think of God.⁶ This vein of irony was, to be sure, already apparent, but the additional evocative power of the *green fields* gives another turn of the screw.⁷

It is rather obviously not a book with a shagreen cover or a table covered in green (*pace* Smith) that Shakespeare has Mrs. Quickly describing, nor is it the literal *cooling* of green fields (Theobald-Warburton); Dover Wilson's suggestion seems to bring us closer to Shakespeare's meaning:

Perhaps Sh[akespeare] wished to hint that Fal. babbled of 'green pastures', i.e., repeated in his delirium the 23rd psalm (got by heart in the days when he ruined his voice in 'singing of anthems') as Ophelia repeated 'old lauds' in hers.⁸

(And he refers to another possible echo of the Psalms in line 36-37.) I would focus Professor Wilson's suggestion more narrowly: I have been conjecturing that Shakespeare, whether unintentionally or deliberately, gives us Falstaff babbling of green fields, leaving it to the 'singer of anthems' or devout reader of *Christian Prayers* to recognize that Falstaff was indeed making a good death (as those of the audience not immediately reminded of these prayers would already have been told by Mrs. Quickly). So deeply does the thread of liturgical and devotional phraseology penetrate the fabric of Tudor thought that one who has read the primers and other books of prayer continually finds echoes in the literature of Elizabethan England; and of these echoes Professor White writes that "in a good many cases it is like following a will-o'-the-wisp through a bog to try to run down the teasing echo, and yet there is no question of the relation. Very often

⁵ Malone and Steevens pointed to similar passages in other Tudor writings — *The Plays and Poems of William Shakespeare* (1821), xvii, 320.

⁶ Falstaff previously evoked Gospel phraseology in speaking of himself — but in his hubris; now at last he is, without doubt, sincere.

⁷ *King Henry V* (Cambridge ed., 1947), p. 141.

⁸ *Tudor Books of Private Devotion*, p. 208.

it is, of course, no more than the fact that the ultimate source of the prayers is the same, the Bible"⁹

This suggested echo then throws some light upon this fascinating passage — a celebrated emendation and a dramatically important passage — and it also provides another connection between Shakespeare and the vital tradition of the Tudor books of devotion.¹⁰

9 What of the question whether it is to be *talk* or *babble*? An editorial error of *table* for *bable* (the old spelling) is plausible, to be sure, and Mrs. Quickly would likely have thought of Falstaff's words as babbling. Yet *table* is a possible misprint for *talke*, and the quarto reading ('and talk of floures') may be used, as by Harrison, to support *talk* as the easier reading; but one must consider Wilson's note that the quarto reading "through a perversion of the F. 'and play with flowers' [line 14], was prob. also influenced by 'babbled'."

I see no reason not to follow Theobald here, though he may well have been right for the wrong reasons.

A PLAN FOR PLAYWRIGHTS-IN-RESIDENCE

By GEORGE HERMAN

"I wonder how much money
My new play yields?"
This is what Shakespeare said . . ."

Alan Porter, *The Poet's Journey*

As the past season dimmed into theatrical history, the customary dirge of the New York professional was heard again in our land. "The theatre is dying!" Perhaps the lyrics were slightly different, but the music was familiar. In the field of television, Jack Gould wailed:

"Regular weekly drama on television indeed has fallen upon sad days . . . In a year's time TV was consuming . . . as much drama as the Broadway theatre turned up in six or seven years. Sooner or later there was bound to be a reckoning; writing is not quite the same as casing sausages."¹

On the subject of legitimate drama, Louis Calta wept:

"The 1957-58 term . . . while it was notable for a number of quality productions . . . was not exceptionally active. It produced only seventy-seven attractions, compared with eighty-three in 1956-57."²

During this season, only two new American playwrights were introduced to Broadway: William Gibson (*Two for the Seesaw*) and Morton Wishengrad (*The Rope Dancers*). Of the two, Mr. Gibson's play was perhaps the bigger success. Nevertheless, it is little more than *The Voice of the Turtle* with a cast cut. His theme was that infidelity does not make for peace of mind. Mr. Wishengrad's gloomy melodrama has been described as "sombre, meaningless drama."³

From abroad came the unfamiliar John Osborne with two angry plays and Swiss dramatist Friedrich Duerrenmatt. The first was commended for his articulate rage and the second for his theatrical fatalism. It was truly a joyous season.

Even the American theatre abroad was criticized:

". . . the United States is faced with the irony of having built a theatre (at the Brussels World Fair) and having no plays to put into it. While the other nations are sending the Old Vic, the

1 Jack Gould, "Drama In Decline," *New York Times* (May 18, 1958), page 11 (Theatre Section).

2 Louis Calta, "Season In Retrospect," *New York Times* (June 29, 1958), p. 3 (Theatre Section).

3 William Talbot, "Broadway At Its Best," *Critique* (May, 1958), p. 33.

George Herman is a member of the Speech and Drama Department at Clarke College, Dubuque, Iowa.

Comedie Francaise, the Moscow Art Theatre, etc., we are sending the Yale University Players and a regional group from San Francisco."⁴

And though Broadway introduced two new playwrights and 77 productions, what happened to the 23 others thought worthy of professional production at the beginning of the season?⁵

However, there was one encouraging sign: there were more new books about theatre published in 1957-58, than new plays produced! The past season seemed to justify the opinion of Pliny that "criticism comes easier than craftsmanship," and to validate the opinion of Peter Ustinov, author of last season's *Romanoff and Juliet*:

"... it is indicative of the times we live in that there are so many critical books about the theatre, written with brilliance and conviction by men whose very intelligence has engendered an utter creative sterility."⁶

Further, our best native talent produced, in the opinion of many, poor material or none at all least season. Tennessee Williams was represented off-Broadway by *Garden District* and a side trip to cannibalism. Arthur Miller's *The Crucible* was resurrected, also off-Broadway. William Inge gave us *The Dark At the Top Of The Stairs* described as "packaged vignettes."⁷ Saroyan returned with *The Cave Dwellers*, and Maxwell Anderson gave a hand to *The Day The Money Stopped* — which was four days after it opened. Arthur Laurents wrote the book to *West Side Story*, listed in *Catholic Entertainment Digest* as "completely objectionable."

Of the current lot, naturalism was the prevalent form, and materialism or nihilism the prevailing philosophy.

This, of course, will have its effect on educational theatre in the coming scholastic season. Generally addicted to re-hashing Broadway's least objectionable material during our seasons, the educator will find fewer plays to choose from, of generally lower quality, and no new works to meet the particular problems of many of our institutions, such as low budgets, all-male or all-female casts, Catholic thematic material, and limited equipment.

One obvious solution to this increasing problem is more and better playwrights. Maurice Evans recognized this in the field of television:

4 James Judson in a letter to "Drama Mailbag," *New York Times* (April 27, 1958), p. X3 (Theatre Section).

5 The following were all optioned by Broadway producers and scheduled for production at the beginning of the 1957-58 season. None were produced: *A Soft Touch*, *The Saturday Night Kid*, *The Joshua Tree*, *The Old Lady's Visit*, *Chaparral*, *The Young Strangers*, *The Boarding House*, *Fever For Life*, *The Dazzling Hour*, *The Lonely Passion of Judith Hearne*, *So Like Lucrece*, *Cut of the Axe*, *Bette Bibb*, *A For Adult*, *The Marriner Method*, *The Minotaur*, *Brouhaha*, and these musicals: *Zuleika*, *Goldilocks*, *For Amusement Only*, *High and Happy*, *Trelawney of the Wells* and *Camille*.

6 Peter Ustinov, "Wanted: New Perspective For Playwrights," *Theatre Arts* magazine (October, 1957), p. 93.

7 William Talbot, *op. cit.*, p. 37.

"Any (TV) network that is looking to the future should put its first money into writers and lock them in the attic. Eventually it will come to that, and the writer will triumph . . ."8

Ward Morehouse applied the same solution to all the media of theatre: "The American theatre needs writers more than anything else."⁹

And Father Stapleton, President of the National Catholic Theatre Conference, has said ". . . the Conference must do more to promote original Catholic playwrighting."¹⁰

The question of where do we get these playwrights is best answered by asking another question: "What are the needs of American playwrights?"

First, of course, is an income dependent of the form of work produced. The television writer who must please an account executive, an executive producer, a director, and a number of personally ambitious actors and actresses; and who realizes that the end to be achieved by their joint efforts is not quality production but increased soap sales, will end up not writing at all. The need for financial independence was recognized by Theatre, Incorporated, many years ago.

"The founders of Theatre, Inc., are convinced that there are persons who believe, as they do, that . . . freed from the fettering impositions which money-making forces on to creative enterprise, it can take its place . . . as a proper object of philanthropic support."¹¹

It is indicative of our age that such "philanthropic support" did not emerge in New York, and Theatre, Incorporated, died.

The second need of the playwright is a system of laboratories — places to receive theatrical experience.

"Playwrights, like everyone else, have to learn by experience. Our job is to provide every possible opportunity for younger writers to secure that experience."¹²

Now, where can the young playwright secure these two essentials? More repertory theatres, say some New York producers.

". . . (Repertory has) other advantages . . . In the classical European sense, a repertory theatre is regarded as a library of plays — a fountainhead for the preservation of a nation's dramatic classics,

8 Maurice Evans, "No Time For Playwrights," *Theatre Arts* magazine (December, 1955), p. 95.

9 Ward Morehouse, "Forecast For 1957-58," *Theatre Arts* magazine (October, 1957), p. 83.

10 Rev. Gabriel Stapleton, "The Conference in the Age of Space," *Critique* (May, 1958), p. 6.

11 Norris Houghton, program notes to Theatre Incorporated's production of *Pygmalion* starring Gertrude Lawrence, p. 6.

12 Roger L. Stevens, "ANTA's Forty-Theatre Circuit Plan," *Theatre Arts* magazine (December, 1955), p. 75.

a constant source of stimulation and reinvigoration for the nation's playwrights."¹³

And so, New York is preparing to build the Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts. *One* theatre. To "stimulate" the nation's playwrights.

Some believe the playwright needs low-cost or cost-free education in his craft and a national laboratory for his works. And so, the American Theatre Wing is now becoming the "University of Entertainment Arts."¹⁴

And the National Catholic Theatre Conference has just completed its first Catholic Playwrighting Workshop at Loyola University and is now in midst of its National Playwrighting Festival in which each of its member colleges and high schools is called upon to produce an NCTC-recommended original.

Certainly the key to the problem of a national laboratory lies in the vast educational system of America. As of 1952, there were 1858 colleges and university groups in this country working in theatre, 26,800 high schools, and 1437 community groups!¹⁵

Some aggressive individuals have already pioneered in this field:

"May I point out what my husband and I have been doing to help the plight of the young artists? . . . We have been presenting, mostly under Roman Catholic parish, college, school or organizational auspices, fresh new professional . . . talent."¹⁶

And the young artists, themselves, realize this:

"The most desirable and, in spite of all, most available area is university teaching . . . Last spring Antioch College in Ohio received more than 200 applications for one . . . vacant position."¹⁷

If the Catholic educational system is the key to the problem, and if the problem is in producing Catholic playwrights of quality, then I submit that Catholic administrations should consider a position on their staff for playwrights-in-residence.

The playwright-in-residence is both teacher and writer. His income would be adequate for his needs but also provide for additional bonuses for material he produces for the college. He will be called upon from time-to-time to write upon assignment some of the many "programs," pageants, or "entertainments" so often needed in a college schedule. At the same time he will be expected to

13 Lewis Funke, "Lincoln Center Prepares For Repertory," *New York Times* (May 18, 1958), p. xl (Theatre Section).

14 Arthur Gelb, "New Aims For The Theatre Wing," *New York Times* (May 18, 1958), p. 3 (Theatre Section).

15 O. Glenn Saxon, "The Plight of the Living Theatre in the United States," *Theatre Arts* magazine (April, 1954), p. 70.

16 Kathleen Whalen, letter to "The Mail Pouch," *New York Times* (June 15, 1958), p. 9 (Theatre Section).

17 Robert Cogan, *ibid.*

produce one major production a year, direct another, and write a third. He will emerge as Gordon Craig's "superman":

"... capable of inventing and rehearsing a play; of writing any necessary music; capable of designing and superintending the construction of both scenery and costume; and of inventing such machinery as is needed and the lighting that is to be used."¹⁸

Educational theatre has fallen into the trap of professional specialization. Our larger Catholic institutions have a "technical man" who does nothing but design and construct and/or light the productions; staff directors who direct, and — alas — playwrighting professors who do not write plays. But a playwright needs some degree of proficiency in *all* phases of theatre; and, as Catholic University recently learned, a good "technical" man might emerge as a wonderfully spectacular director.

The protests can be heard from coast to coast. "It's impossible to find such people!" cries the administration. No, it is not impossible at all. We have been indoctrinated for so long with the erroneous assumption that playwrights are dreadful directors that we believe it. Yet Arthur Miller's own production of *The Crucible* in arena staging was far more successful than the lavish Broadway conception of it. No one has ever *asked* or *required* a playwright to direct in our educational institutions.

"Tryanny and a great imposition!" yell the playwrights themselves who envision great art as something produced by scratching the soul in a garret miles from the theatre itself — and preferably a little at a time. I hope to prove that great art is produced by scratching on a pad with pencil every day when you neither feel like writing or are particularly enthusiastic about your subject matter, or when you are in the director's seat working under limited conditions with a limited cast.

"The only thing such a plan could produce is a second-rate hack!" scream the non-writing professors of playwrighting who believe that a creator must be drowned in theory before he can learn to swim in art. I yield that a nation-wide acceptance of a playwright-in-residence, working under the conditions I have specified, in our universities *would* produce hacks.

"What's wrong with that?"

"I sometimes get to thinking that what the theatre needs is more hacks . . . (a hack is) any writer who writes to order, writes rapidly, or, in a burst of thoughtless vulgarity, writes more than one play every three years."¹⁹

¹⁸ Gordon Craig, as quoted in "The Artist of the Theatre," *Theatre Arts* magazine (June, 1957), p. 23.

¹⁹ Walter Kerr, *Pieces At Eight*, (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1957), p. 22.

My concept of a "playwright-in-residence" is a man who will have time enough to write, and who doesn't require five, six, or eight hours a day assignment-free. Further, his works would be available to his college or theatrical group exclusively for *first production* rights.

The principal objections to this plan will come from the playwrights themselves who feel themselves restricted by writing on assignment, who claim they have no time to write if they direct and produce and teach, too; but, in reality, as the basis of these objections, is an instilled fear of the word "hack" as something vaguely inartistic and un-American — like "opera."

"The fear of becoming a hack has, I think, kept many a talented man or women from becoming a useful playwright.²⁰

The fact is: subsidized, writing-on-assignment has produced our greatest theatre; and being a writer-director-teacher makes for a *better* writer, a more *artistic* writer.

Sophocles was an actor as well as a playwright, and Aeschylus was a designer as well. In China, the Emperors subsidized their writers, and the *No* plays of Japan were written by court-protected hacks who had to please their benefactor — or else.

Hrosvitha wrote under Church "sudsidy" and with a self-imposed "assignment" to "correct" the comedies of Terence.²¹

In Spain, Lope de Rueda wrote *The Olives* for his own company — on assignment. Timoneda did, too. Lope de Vega, after his repentance, was given a titular post by the Pope and produced, under the auspices of the Church, over four hundred *autos sacramentales* — works written on assignment for acting on pageant cars during Corpus Christi processions!

In England, John Lyly wrote especially for his company of boy-actors, and George Peele dashed off *The Arraignment of Paris* to Queen Elizabeth's specifications — ending with Paris presenting the golden apple to the "Virgin Queen."

Shakespeare was the greatest of hacks. Starting as a play doctor and an actor, he spent nearly twenty years writing for one company.

Moliere, in France, was subsidized with his company, *Les Enfants de Famille*, under Louis XIV and turned out ballets, interludes, and improvisations for the monarch's social affairs.

In Germany, Caroline Neuber and her husband Johann Christoph Gottsched wrote and directed and starred in their Royal Polish and Electoral Saxon Court Comedians. Gotthold Lessing wrote for their company. During the *Sturm und*

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 156.

²¹ Sheldon Cheney, *The Theatre*, (New York: Tudor Publishing Company, 1947), p. 143.

Drang era, Goethe wrote expressly for the Weimar Court Theatre where he was full-time director for 26 years under the Duke of Weimar. He wrote on assignment, finally resigning when the Duke insisted on a play which could star his trained poodle!

Johann Friederich von Schiller wrote for the Mannheim National Theatre and for Goethe's company. Auguste Wilhelm Iffland was both actor and playwright who wrote for his company. Sheridan wrote *School For Scandal* for his Drury Lane company exclusively. Wagner reached fulfillment at the Festival Theatre at Bayreuth where he could stage his own works. Andre Antoine's *Theatre Libre* had no resident playwright, and, after nine years, it failed because it "turned up no new playwrights of permanent world importance."²² Shaw wrote *Widowers' Houses* especially for the Independent Theatre of J. T. Grein in London. Granville-Barker was actor and director and dramatist for his own company. Ibsen was subsidized, finally, and penned a number of works for the Christiana Norwegian Theatre.²³ Gilbert and Sullivan wrote for the D'Oyly Carte Company exclusively.

Nor can it be argued that times have changed. Jean Anouilh was taught his craft in residence with the Louis Jouvet Company. *Oklahoma!* was "hack-written" on assignment from the Theatre Guild who owned *Green Grow The Lilacs* at the time. In fact, most Broadway musicals today — being adaptations — are written on assignment from the producer who owns the property. Sandy Wilson (*The Boy Friend*) was a hack — writing special material on assignment in the West End not very long ago; and Charles Gaynor (*Lend an Ear*) writes revues on assignment — in the past from the Pittsburgh Playhouse.

In Germany today the most productive theatres are the "theatre cabarets" where young satirists-directors like Rolf Ulrich and Jo Herbst write on assignment for their companies. Jerry Ross (*Pajama Game*, *Damn Yankees*) was a hack at summer resorts writing special material on assignment after NYU.

But the prime examples of playwrights-in-residence who taught, directed, produced, adapted and wrote as well — and often on assignment, are the Kerrs, Jean and Walter. At Catholic University Jean did sketches for *That's Where The Money Goes* and *Jenny Kissed Me*. Walter Kerr penned *Touch and Go* and *Sing Out, Sweet Land*. And in their spare time they did adaptations of Aristophanes and Shakespeare that were unique and entertaining.

Leo Brady, still in residence at Catholic University, teaches full-time, directs major productions, and still has time to write. *Brother Orchid* was written as an undergraduate, but since then, as a teacher-writer, he has penned a number of musicals and two novels and some television scripts. Father Gilbert Hartke, Chairman of the Speech and Drama Department at Catholic University, found time to adapt *The Little World of Don Camillo*, despite his full schedule.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 454.

²³ John Gassner, *Masters of the Drama*, (New York: Dover Publication, 1940), p. 357-360. It can be noted, too, that Ibsen also began as "playwright-in-residence" in Bergen.

Catholic colleges and theatre groups would be doing a great service to the playwright by adding him to their staff. First, the Catholic environment would serve to keep everything in proportion — away from the influences that have reduced Tennessee Williams, perhaps, our most promising playwright, to the psychiatrist's couch. Secondly, by writing on assignment, the craftsman is disciplined; and in directing his own work, soon realizes the expendability of his most cherished prose.

Actually, the nuns and priests currently writing in our institutions are "hacks" in this sense. The majority of them are writing on assignment from their superiors; and they perform directorial chores out of obedience.

In my own experience as "playwright-in-residence" at a Catholic institution for women for the past four years, I have adapted Stephen Vincent Benet's short stories, Dylan Thomas' "A Child's Christmas In Wales" from *Quite Early One Morning*, the poetry of Gerard Manley Hopkins, and Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland* for the stage. I wrote three musicals: *Woman of The Year* (on assignment for Parents' Day), *The Angel of St. Trinians*, and *Big Wheel* (for an all-girl high school). I wrote a one-act play, *Little Rome* for vocation month, and a full-length play, *A Smell of Cinnamon*, about the college's foundress for the anniversary of the Order.

I teach a full schedule, directed *Anastasia* and my own works, designed and constructed sets for arena productions of *Skin of Our Teeth* and *The Matchmaker* (in which I played Cornelius and Mr. Antrobus) and a proscenium production of *Night Must Fall* (in which I also played Hubert).

I maintain that this schedule has made me a better writer; and the income from these works being produced elsewhere is more than welcomed. But, most of all, I know what lines will read well, what scenes can be played, and how effective my work will be with the materials we have available.

The problem lies in encouraging our young writers to go into teaching. Many are lured by the prospect of big money in television or on Broadway. Many more are afraid of working for years in an educational institution without being "recognized."

"A feeling of anonymity is useful in writing. It isn't good to trail your past behind you, thinking of plays you have done, things you have written years before . . ." ²⁴

This from a man who was a hack, writing special lyrics and some music in London's West End for years, who performed as an actor in repertory, who wrote a musical revue *She Shall Have Music* to the specifications of Andre Charlot in 1935; and who, three years later, was to be approached by the vicar of his local parish and asked to write — on assignment — a pageant to mark the fifteenth anniversary of the local church.

24 Christopher Fry, quoted in "A Visit With Mr. Fry," *New York Times* (April 27, 1958), p. 3.

The result was *Boy With A Cart*.

We have no national theatre for our playwrights, so the Catholic colleges and universities must fill the gap. If each institution would add to its staff one person who is principally a writer, I submit that there will be a new flood of high-quality material made available for us.

Further, they will produce more Catholic playwrights.

Or, at least, excellent hacks.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- "Artist of the Theatre," *Theatre Arts* (June, 1957), 23.
- "A Visit With Mr. Fry," *New York Times* (April 27, 1958), 11.
- Calta, Louis. "Season In Retrospect," *New York Times* (June 29, 1958), 3.
- Cheney, Sheldon. *The Theatre*. New York: Tudor Publishing Company, 1947.
- Evans, Maurice. "No Time For Playwrights," *Theatre Arts* (December, 1955). 95.
- Funke, Lewis. "Lincoln Center Prepares For Repertory," *New York Times* (May 18, 1958) xl.
- Gassner, John. *Masters of the Drama*. New York: Dover Publications, 1940.
- Gelb, Arthur. "New Aims For The Theatre Wing," *New York Times* (May 18, 1958) 3.
- Gould, Jack. "Drama In Decline," *New York Times* (May 18, 1958) 11.
- Kerr, Walter. *Pieces At Eight*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1957.
- Talbot, William. "Broadway At Its Best," *Critique* (May, 1958) 33.
- Morehouse, Ward. "Forecast For 1957-58," *Theatre Arts* (October, 1957) 83.
- Saxon, O. Glenn. "The Plight of the Living Theatre in the United States," *Theatre Arts* (April, 1954) 70.
- Stapleton, Rev. Gabriel. "The Conference in the Age of Space," *Critique* (May, 1958) 6.
- Stevens, Roger L. "ANTA's Forty-Theatre Circuit Plan," *Theatre Arts* (December, 1955) 75.
- Ustinov, Peter. "Wanted: New Perspective For Playwrights," *Theatre Arts* (October, 1957) 93.

DRAMA: TO TEACH OR TO PLEASE?

By DONALD HUGH DICKINSON

What does the artist make, and what is his purpose in making it? What is the end of art — to teach or to please? These questions, it may surprise you to learn, provoked the liveliest and most prolonged discussions at the Catholic Playwriting Workshop, '58, sponsored for the first time by the National Catholic Theatre Conference last June at Loyola University, Chicago. The workshop is past, but the debate continues, as shown by the critiques later sent to me, as chairman, by the aspiring playwrights who attended. Their afterthoughts prompt me to write this coda to a venturesome and stimulating experiment.

One thoughtful member was disturbed by the tendency of some to set up "a dichotomy between the two-fold ends of the artist," and saw it as showing "a lack of both historical realization and of maturity." The writer continued: "Surely the history of literature gives evidence enough that no period, writer, or group of writers produced any great work of art when they stressed one end, or even were conscious of the apparent opposition. A mature artist, aware of his heritage, sees no dichotomy, only a superb unison of two complementary ends."

This is well said, and one can only hope that the synthesis may somehow be achieved by the artist, if not by the theorists. For since the Renaissance, at least, the debate has continued: Pleasure or profit? Or, pleasure and profit? And, whether we like it or not, ours is a critical and self-conscious age, intent on examining everything. For my part, I think such intense and lively interest is a sign of health, rather than an occasion for regret. The playwright, like any other artist, must cope with the temper and the issues of his time. Yet I hold with the writer that the opposition noted is more apparent than real, that the dichotomy is a false one. How, then, is the playwright to surmount it?

I should like to suggest a way. In preparing for the workshop, I read many plays submitted by applicants. If they may be taken as representative of the work of contemporary Catholic playwrights, they indicate a tendency that I find disquieting. At the very least, it must prove ultimately self-defeating. Therefore, my suggestion, which is in two parts, attempts to deal only with this tendency: it does not constitute any new theory of art, nor even one that is applicable in all cases. I am not issuing a manifesto, but offering a corrective.

First, I submit that pleasure can be its own profit. Rightly regarded, this is by no means a frivolous statement. It emphasizes, for my purpose, one aspect of the nature of art. St. Thomas Aquinas, who knew that the business of art is the creation of beauty, defined beauty as "that which, being seen, pleases." In short, that which gives pleasure. Let us clear our minds of the whiff of carnality or evil of frivolity that taints the word "pleasure." It is as much a Puritan legacy as is our tendency to confuse mere solemnness with seriousness. ("Where," asked one

of the play-readers, "is there any laughter in these plays? I thought Christianity was a religion of joy.")

The work of art achieves beauty because it is grounded in truth and possesses its own integrity and proportion. But it is the beauty of it which refreshes us, recreates us, and appeases our thirst for its radiance. I hold this to be a just view of the nature of art; and, if we keep it in mind, we shall not beggar drama or any other art by regarding the pleasure it yields as an incidental concession, a sugar-coating to cover some didactic pill we wish the audience to swallow. Nor shall we, by the same token, try to deprive art of its didactic element. But this will be so, only as long as we see that art has its own province and its proper means; that most often it teaches best by indirection; and, therefore, that the best way to teach in art is to please.

Second, I submit that the province of drama is the depiction of *man in life*. This is true, however nobly ample and inspiring the artist's vision. Whatever else drama may be concerned with, it must be primarily concerned with man. That is why it disturbs me deeply to find some among our aspiring Catholic playwrights evidencing what I can only describe as a lack of interest in human nature as such. We say that our aim is a Christian, humanist art of the drama. But where is our humanism, if we do not consider humanity worthy of our deepest consideration?

If the reasons for this are only ignorance or inexperience, they are both curable. But, if they go deeper, then the playwright's attitude is indeed disquieting. At the least, he has mistaken the nature of drama. But there is a deeper consideration. As a Christian, the playwright ought to be more, not less, interested in human nature. His Christianity ought to make him appreciate human nature with deeper and keener insight, and cherish it all the more; not hold it unimportant or render it superficial for the sake of some message which, as often as not, he has not bothered to embody in the action of his play.

Many of the plays that I read are like the Greek god Anteus, whose strength left him whenever he lost contact with the earth. The arts appeal to the senses, although their effects do not end with them. And it is the senses through which, as St. Thomas reminds us, we derive all our knowledge — even our knowledge of God. The playwright achieves contact with the earth through the physical world around him and the people in it: the way things look, feel, taste, sound, smell; the way people look, speak, move, and act. The artist must be one for whom the physical world exists.

Indeed, in the widest sense, he cannot lose contact with the earth without doing violence to his own nature. By this I mean his own experience, his present and his past — the rich storehouse of his childhood and the daily riches of his life among men which he will go on garnering until the moment of his death. All this is his material, the very stuff of art. And so it is all the more alarming to encounter playwrights who, in their scripts, seem to have forgotten the people and places and events they know; and who, as if by some perverse act of will, seem to have cut themselves off from the continuity of their own lives. The result

is too often predictable: plays written from prim, cheerless preconceptions of life, not from the stimulus of significant experience that cries out to be communicated.

If the playwright wishes to express his faith through drama, he must do it by depicting man. If he will leave to the pulpit and apologetics the task of preaching and defending his faith, then he will be free to use the stage to *celebrate* it. If he aims at the spiritual world, let him only remember that, to do so successfully, he must begin with the physical world. If he wishes his art to be dramatic, he must come to grips with human nature — real human nature, not some attenuated, plaster-cast version of it. Grace works through nature, not vice versa.

A few days after the playwriting workshop, I attended a reception for a newly ordained priest and received a card commemorating the occasion. On it was a quotation from Nicholas Berdyaev. It struck me as particularly apt for the Catholic playwright: "Perhaps the mystery of God is better revealed by the mystery of man, than by a direct search for God to the exclusion of man."

The essential thing is to adjust our thought to the new conditions; to see what is living and what is dead in the Western tradition; and to realize that the immense new powers that man has acquired during the last half century can be used in the service of freedom just as easily as they have been used to destroy it.

Christopher Dawson in —
The Failure of Liberalism

DRAMA BOOKSHELF

CALIGULA AND THREE OTHER PLAYS

CALIGULA AND THREE OTHER PLAYS, by Ibert Camus, trans. Stuart Gilbert. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1958. 302 pp. \$5.00

This collection of plays by Albert Camus, winner of the 1957 Nobel Prize for Literature, strikingly illustrates the French tradition of closely linking philosophy and literature. It also demonstrates the evolution in the author's thinking during the period 1938-1948. *CALIGULA* (1938) and *THE MISUNDERSTANDING* (1943) reflect Camus' concern with the darkness of an absurd world, made darker by man's depravity. This "philosophy of the absurd" pictures each man struggling absolutely alone in a world of suffering and contradiction. Since happiness is an illusion, the only hope of survival lies in reason, and man must either negate all feeling and become as stone or take his own life — there is no alternative. *THE STATE OF SIEGE* (1948) and *THE JUST ASSASINS* (1949) demonstrate the "philosophy of revolt" in which man affirms that even in destruction there are limits and a certain order. Recognizing a value that transcends the "absurd," man must rebel and, in so doing, is forced out of himself and becomes closely identified with others.

CALIGULA, by far Camus' most theatrical play, is the story of a young and idealistic Caesar, who, upon the death of his mistress, learns that "men must die, and they are not happy." In his grief Caligula determines to seek the impossible—to "possess the moon." Since he has absolute authority, there are no frontiers to his power; the exercise of his limitless liberty is the material from which the play is fashioned. Although in the end conspirators wield the daggers that destroy him, Caligula is, without question, a "superior suicide." This is an intellectual tragedy in which the plot is logical, the characters believable, the dialogue rapid and fused, the writing, for the most part, powerful, and the philosophy nihilistic.

THE MISUNDERSTANDING demonstrates perfectly Camus' philosophy of the "absurd." In order to realize her dream of a better life, Martha, with the help of her mother, kills and robs the travellers who stop at her inn. Returning home after an absence of twenty years, Jan, her brother, leaves his wife alone for the night and enters Martha's inn as a stranger. Hoping to be recognized and loved by his mother and sister before sharing with them his riches, Jan retains his incognito and suffers the fate of the other transients. When the mother discovers Jan's identity she drowns herself; Martha too becomes a suicide, but not before trying to destroy all faith and hope in Jan's wife. Although some of the scenes are powerfully written, the play as a whole does not ring true; the characters have no human dimension, and the dialogue is nothing more than a stiff exchange of ideas. However, the play has an overwhelming final curtain — if one felt the least sympathy for the characters it would be unbearable.

THE STATE OF SIEGE, the weakest play in the collection, is an allegory in which the characters are pure abstractions and the dialogue forced and unreal. It is interesting only as a demonstration of Camus' philosophy of "revolt." The protagonist, Diego, dedicates himself to the cause of humanity knowing that it

will consume all, even his life, and leave no room for happiness.

THE JUST ASSASINS is the story of the murder of the Grand Duke of Russia by a group of revolutionary terrorists. Although united in the same act, Stephen is inspired by hate and believes "the world must be destroyed from top to bottom," but Kaliayev, the protagonist, is motivated by love and believes that even in destruction there are definite limits. The play, a defense of purely human values, is dramatically sound and, like CALIGULA, should make exciting theatre. It is interesting that Camus' best plays are based on historical characters and incidents.

Stuart Gilbert has, for the most part, accurately and beautifully translated Camus' ideas and dramatic spirit. A preface, containing the author's evaluation of each play, is particularly challenging. Camus demands much from his readers and, without question, is not everyone's sip of absinthe! However, the discriminating reader with a sound foundation in philosophy and literature should find these plays both stimulating and thought provoking.

Sister M. Gregory, O.P.
Rosary College
River Forest, Illinois

MÉZIÈRES' FOURTEENTH-CENTURY PROMPT BOOK

MÉZIÈRES' FOURTEENTH-CENTURY HANDBOOK, New Haven: Department of Graphic Arts, Yale University, 1958. 85 pp. \$3.50.

In 1911 Karl Young first edited and published *FESTUM PRAESENTATIONIS BEATAE MARIAE VIRGINIS*, an exciting and long neglected 14th century manuscript by Philippe de Mézières. However, scholars evinced little or no interest in the work although it was "the best, the most lucid and descriptive prompt book to come out of the middle ages." Young included the work in his *DRAMA OF THE MEDIEVAL CHURCH* in 1933, but again it failed to generate enthusiasm in academic circles. Now, twenty-five years later, Albert Weiner has published a new translation of the work because, like Young, he believes it can "fill some of the remaining gaps in our knowledge of Church staging."

Mr. Weiner has given us a beautiful, fascinating, and scholarly work. In an instructive foreword he sketches Mézières' life, traces the history of *FESTUM* from the first production in Avignon on November 21, 1372, until the general decline of the Medieval Church Stage around 1450, and lists the possible sources of the Feast of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin. In addition to the foreword Mr. Weiner includes a twenty-five page essay, *THE BIRTH OF MODERN ACTING*, in which he carefully examines the specialized problems posed by Church Drama and the techniques used by medieval actors to solve them. This informative essay is a sort of prelude to the text of *FESTUM PRAESENTATIONIS BEATAE MARIAE VIRGINIS*—a text exquisitely illustrated by James Higa and Harry Harringer. Phillippe de Mézières, who found in the *FESTUM* his *raison d'être*, could not have wished for a more lucid and beautiful treatment of his prompt book was given by Mr. Weiner. This work should be a "must" for those interested in theatre history and

would delight anyone who loves a beautiful and informative book—unfortunately, it appears in a limited edition of only 350 copies.

NCTC Library Acquisition

Sister M. Gregory, O.P.
Rosary College
River Forest, Illinois

Cohen, Selma Jean. "The Achievement of Martha Graham," *CHRYSALIS*, 1958, Volume XI, Numbers 5 & 6, pp. 3-11.

Selma Cohen gives an excellent assessment of the scope of Martha Graham's contributions to the dance. Breaking with her memoirs in 1926, Miss Graham strove for a new plasticity, emotional and physical, in dance. In her earlier period, partly as a result of her study of the primitive rituals of the American Southwest and Mexico, her technique focused principally on exterior movement. Because she found life to be nervous, sharp, and zigzag, she decided that the impulse for movement should be from the torso rather than from the extremities as in ballet and that the movement should be brittle, thrusting, and angular based on principles of contraction and release as opposed to the fluid, circular movement of ballet. Through the process of time, however, she has come to realize that the emotional motivations for movement are more important than gross muscular movement. Hence, her mature work takes note of the "interior landscape" and is of greater emotional and dramatic range although the Graham dancer always maintains a basic intensity, is never relaxed, and maintains tension even in lyric moods.

Saroyan, William. "Ionesco," *THEATRE ARTS* (July, 1958) pp. 25-26.

This brief introduction to the complete texts of "The Chairs" and "The Lessons" is noteworthy not for its Saroyanesque enthusiasm but for his summation of the bitter existentialist conviction at the root of Becket's abysmal anguish and Ionesco's hyena laughter: namely, the conviction that "the human race is mad, and that the world has been in an uncharted and unknown dimension of hopeless lunacy — if not criminality — for centuries, and is now way off in this dimension." Although he concedes that both playwrights lack size and range, he is very fond of these two "arrogant, seedy, new scientists of drama."

Brown, Ivor. "The Red' and the Rescue," *DRAMA* (Summer, 1958), Number 49, pp. 22-25.

This contains an interesting account of a new attempt to obtain public patronage in England for art which must otherwise continue to operate "in the red." The solution would nationalize lapsed royalties. Once a copyright has lapsed, royalties would still have to be paid, but paid not to the author or heirs, but to the government which would then subsidize national and municipal theatres. Mr. Brown is fascinated by speculating on how much would have accrued to the arts "if even the most trifling royalty had been paid on every printing and performance of Shakespeare's work since the 17th century." Pros and cons by people eminent in theatre and publishing follow Mr. Brown's statement of the proposition.

INDEX TO VOLUME ONE

	Number and page
CASPER Leonard. The Godmask of MacLeish.....	3, 11
DICKINSON, Donald Hugh.	
Drama: Teach or To Please?.....	3, 39
The <i>Firstborn</i> Rehearsed.....	2, 9
Mr. Eliot's <i>Hotel Universe</i>	1, 33
DRAMA BOOKSHELF.....	1, 49; 2, 50; 3, 42
GASSNER, John. Eugene O'Neill: the Course of a Modern Dramatist.....	1, 5
HERMAN, George.	
The Illegitimate Art: an Apology To and For American Musical Theatre, Part I.....	1, 15
The Illegitimate Art, Part II.....	2, 21
A Plan for Playwrights-in-Residence.....	3, 30
LAVERY, Emmet. Lady of Letters.....	2, 45
OKEY, L. LaMont. Oral Reading for Time and the Essence.....	2, 46
ROVER, Dominic, O.P. The Concept of Christian Tragedy.....	3, 2
SCHOECK, R. J. The Death of Falstaff: Green Fields Once More.....	3, 27
STADELMAN, Sarah Lee. The Chorus of the National Greek Chorus.....	3, 19
STAPLETON, Gabriel, S.D.S.	
The Conference in an Age of Space.....	2, 3
A Message from the President.....	1, 3
TALBOT, William. Broadway at its Best.....	2, 33
THEATRE ARCHITECTURE: Fine Arts Building, Marymount College, Salina, Kansas.....	1, 24
WYATT, Euphemia Van Rensselaer. God in a Garden.....	1, 45
WYLD, Lionel D. The Miracle Play in America: an Aspect of Folk Theatre.....	3, 13

NATIONAL CATHOLIC THEATRE CONFERENCE

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President

REV. GABRIEL STAPLETON, S.D.S.
St. Mary High School, Lancaster, New York

Vice President

ROBERT SMETT
136 Sherwood Avenue, Rochester, N.Y.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

EMMET LAVERY
1075 Casiano Road, Los Angeles, California
THERESE MARIE CUNY
Academy of Our Lady, Providence High
School, Chicago, Illinois
REV. URBAN NAGLE, O.P.
College of St. Mary of the Springs,
Columbus, Ohio

REV. ROBERT JOHNSTON, S.J.
St. Louis University, St. Louis, Missouri
SISTER MARY ANGELITA, B.V.M.
Our Lady of Peace High School, St. Paul, Minnesota
SISTER MARY IMMACULATE, S.S.J.
St. Joseph Academy, Wheeling, West Virginia
SISTER MARY MARGUERITE, R.S.M.
Mercy College, Detroit, Michigan

REGIONAL AND UNIT CHAIRMEN

NEW ENGLAND REGION—Regional Chairman: Sister Mary Ernesta, Regis College, Weston, Mass.

Rhode Island Unit: Sister Mary Aurelia, R.S.M., St. Xavier Academy, Providence, R.I.

MID-ATLANTIC REGION—Regional Chairman: Rev. John Leonard, S.J., Fordham University, New York 28, N.Y.

Buffalo Unit: Rev. Lawrence Griffin, O.M.I., Bishop Fallon High School, 1238 Main St., Buffalo 9, N.Y.

Greater N.Y. Unit: Mother Mary Camillus, O.S.U., Academy of Mt. St. Ursula, New York 58, N.Y.

Co-Chairman: Mother Marie Peter, Marymount College, Tarrytown, N.Y.

Maryland Unit: Donald Waters, St. Joseph's College, Emmitsburg, Maryland

Co-Chairman: Sister Evelyn Marie, Institute of Notre Dame, Baltimore, Maryland

New Jersey Unit: Norma Ferris, Benedictine Academy, Elizabeth, N.J.

Co-Chairman: Rev. Malachy Higgiston, S.D.S., Mother of the Savior Seminary, Blackwood, N.J.

Pennsylvania Unit: Sister M. Donatus, I.H.M., Immaculate College, Immaculata, Pa.

Rochester Unit: Sister Helen Daniel, S.S.J., Nazareth College, Rochester, N.Y.

Co-Chairman: Mary Mikell O'Neill, 34 Hermitage Road, Rochester, N.Y.

BLUE RIDGE REGION—Regional Chairman: Sister Anne Regina, St. Joseph's High School, Huntington, W.Va.

SOUTHERN REGION—Regional Chairman: Sister Marie Carol, O.P., Barry College, Miami, Fla.

EAST CENTRAL REGION—Regional Chairman: Sister Patricia Ann, S.C.N., Nazareth College, Nazareth, Ky.

Cincinnati Unit: Sister Hildegard, R.S.M., Our Lady of Cincinnati College, Cincinnati, Ohio

Co-Chairman: Sister Mary Carlos, R.S.M., Mother of Mercy High School, Cincinnati, Ohio

Cleveland Unit: Sister Mary Wilbur, S.N.D., Notre Dame Academy, 1325 Ansel Rd., Cleveland 6, Ohio

Detroit Unit: Sister Mary Avila, I.H.M., Marygrove College, Detroit, Michigan

Co-Chairman: Sister Rose Terrence, O.P., Rosary High School, Detroit, Michigan

Indiana Unit: Sister Mary Olive, S.P., St. Mary of the Woods College, Terre Haute, Indiana

CENTRAL REGION—Regional Chairman: Sister Mary Susan, S.S.N.D., Academy of Our Lady, 1309 W. 95th Street, Chicago 43, Illinois

Chicago Unit: Anna Helen Reuter, 3800 Lake Shore Drive, Chicago 13, Illinois, and Immaculate High School, 640 Irving Park Road, Chicago 13, Illinois

East St. Louis, Ill. Unit: Sister Mary Pius, Ad.P.P.S., St. Therese Academy, East St. Louis, Illinois

La Crosse Unit: Sister Janet, O.S.B., Regis High School, Eau Claire, Wisconsin

Illinois Unit: Sister Mary LaVerne, O.S.F., College of St. Francis, Joliet, Illinois

Iowa Unit: Sister Mary Xavier, B.V.M., Clarke College, Dubuque, Iowa

Wisconsin Unit: Sister Mary Theodata, F.S.P.A., De Padua High School, Ashland, Wisconsin

WEST CENTRAL REGION—Regional Chairman: Sister Agnes Virginia, S.C.L., Hogan High School, Kansas City, Missouri

St. Louis Unit: Sister Mary Jeanine, B.V.M., Xavier High School, St. Louis

Kansas City Unit: Sister Mary William, Lillis High School, Kansas City, Missouri

Nebraska Unit: Rev. Robert P. Neenan, S.J., Creighton Preparatory, Omaha, Nebraska

Oklahoma Unit: Rev. A. J. LeFleur, O.S.A., Cascia Hall, 2520 S. Yorktown, Tulsa, Oklahoma

Wichita Unit: Sister Michael Ann, C.S.J., Marymount College, Salina, Kansas

NORTH CENTRAL REGION—Regional Chairman: Sister Michaela, O.S.B., St. Boniface High School, Cold Springs, Minnesota

South Dakota Unit: Sister Mary Jeanette, O.S.B., Mt. Marty College, Yankton, S.D.

MOUNTAIN REGION—Regional Chairman: Sister Mary James Elmer, B.V.M., Mt. St. Gertrude Academy, Boulder, Colorado

Montana Unit: Sister Mary Seraphine, Girls' Central High School, Butte, Montana

TEXAS REGION—Regional Chairman: Sister Mary Helen Probst, C.C.V.I., Incarnate Word College, San Antonio, Texas

Fort Worth Unit: Sister Marie Therese, S.S.M., St. Edward Academy, Dallas, Texas

Houston Unit: Rev. Walter Scott, C.S.B., St. Thomas High School, 4500 Memorial Drive, Houston 7, Texas

PACIFIC SOUTHWEST REGION—Regional Chairman: Sister Mary Consilia, I.H.M., 600 Olive, Long Beach, California

Los Angeles Unit: Sister Mary Fleurette, I.H.M., Immaculate Heart College, Hollywood 27, California

San Francisco Unit: Mr. Robert F. Shea, Santa Clara University, Santa Clara, California

Co-Chairman: Sister Mary Edward, O.P., Immaculate Conception Academy, San Francisco, California

PACIFIC NORTHWEST REGION—Regional Chairman: Sister Matilda Mary, Holy Names College, Spokane, Washington

